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**BURNOUT AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG FRONTLINE
CHILD PROTECTION WORKERS: A DEPARTMENTAL ANALYSIS**

by

Rachelle Rail

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

through the School of Social Work

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of Master of Social Work at the

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Abstract

The present study explored the levels of burnout and job satisfaction experienced by frontline child protection practitioners and whether the department in which they worked was associated with burnout and job satisfaction. Using a review of the research, as well as quantitative and qualitative methods, this study examined the prevalence and correlates of burnout and job satisfaction and proposed interventions for addressing these issues among frontline child protection workers. A survey that collected information on levels of burnout and job satisfaction among direct service child protection workers within the generally accepted frontline departments was administered to 112 frontline child protection workers. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was used to measure burnout on three dimensions: emotional exhaustion (EE), depersonalization (DP) and personal accomplishment (PA) while job satisfaction was measured by both the single-item and full measure of the job satisfaction scale found in the Quality of Employment survey by Quinn and his colleagues. The findings indicated that there was a significant difference between departments on two of the burnout measures (emotional exhaustion and depersonalization). Further analysis demonstrated that the personal characteristics tested in this study seemed to have had little impact on the dependent variables of burnout and job satisfaction. The qualitative data was predominately analyzed using the central theory of client, worker and organization attributes found in the literature to examine the various sources of burnout and job satisfaction. The qualitative data revealed a similarity in themes and categories with what child protection practitioners find stressful about their work and what provides them job satisfaction. The findings are somewhat limited by a

modest response rate from one of the departments (Children Services: $n = 12$), however identified themes provide guidelines for future research endeavours. The resultant knowledge may then be utilized by organizations to better satisfy the child welfare workforce thereby better serving vulnerable children and their families.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the committed child protection workers of the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society who have dedicated their professional lives to the children and families of our community.

Child protection is a delicate balance between supporting and monitoring parents, as such it requires tremendous skill, patience and dedication to persist in this career.

This study is about the stress and burnout experienced by those who give so much of themselves to protect and support children and families. Child protection workers care about their clients and strive to make a difference in the lives of the children and families in our community. It is hoped that this research will assist in providing some insight into how child protection practitioners may be better supported in their roles and in turn help those who give so much of themselves to others.

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BURNOUT AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG FRONTLINE CHILD PROTECTION WORKERS: A DEPARTMENTAL ANALYSIS

There has been debate among child protection frontline departments regarding which position experiences the most stress/burnout and job satisfaction. Anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that there is a trend where frontline workers apply for other internal positions in order to escape what they perceive to be a more stressful position. Given the nature of child welfare work, it is hypothesized that burnout and job satisfaction levels do not differ between departments.

For the last twenty years, there has been an interest in burnout and job satisfaction among child-protection workers; however, no research examining the differences between the main frontline departments of child welfare agencies could be found. Research on stress/burnout and job satisfaction among child protection workers examines Intake, Family Services, Children Services and Resource workers with the same lens. This occurs regardless of the vast differences in the roles, responsibilities, working conditions and length of client involvement within each of the service areas. The common departments used within child welfare in the province are Intake, Family Services, Children Services and Resource. The current study sought to examine differences and similarities of burnout and job satisfaction among the functional frontline child welfare departments. Its findings, may be used as a framework for potential policy, organizational and practice changes that could foster more productive and sustainable staffs for child protection agencies.

Statement of Purpose

There has long been research documenting the difficult work and immense responsibility of child welfare workers.

In recent years, children's aid workers have further been confronted with a changing political and social landscape with regard to child protection issues. At the same time as expectations of protecting children are heightened, alternative community resources are diminishing, increasingly placing the entire burden of care on CAS's (Regehr, Howe & Chau, 2000).

These well documented changes within child protection support the concept that, today more than ever, child protection practitioners are faced with stress, potential burnout and low job satisfaction. It is important to know not only the stresses that practitioners encounter, but also the counterbalancing satisfaction that continues to motivate them to remain in their jobs (Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991).

Despite the long-time interest in burnout and job satisfaction among child protection workers, no research examining the differences between the main frontline child welfare departments could be found. Research found on burnout and job satisfaction among child protection workers treats Intake, Family Services, Children Services, and Resource workers the same regardless of the vast differences in their roles, responsibilities and length of involvement with the same client. There is a need for further inquiry. There are currently gaps in the literature regarding how burnout and job

satisfaction relate to the specific roles within the field of child welfare. These gaps could be filled by examining the levels of burnout, sources of stress, differences in job satisfaction, as well as solutions to dealing with stressors as identified by workers, in the common frontline departments of child welfare. Direct client services within child welfare agencies are typically divided into different departments, including Intake, Family Services, Children Services and Resources. These four departments have varying responsibilities and those that work within them may experience different levels of burnout and job satisfaction. Research can assist in identifying factors that contribute to, or alleviate burnout and promote job satisfaction. As the prevalence of such problems and their correlates may be different between child welfare agency departments, there may be a need to tailor interventions to address each department's respective issues. This research will attempt to contribute to our understanding of whether certain departments in the field of child welfare are more stressful by comparing the different departments on burnout and job satisfaction levels as well as, comparing other potentially important demographic, professional and organizational factors. This will further increase our knowledge about whether worker, organizational or client attributes are most predictive of burnout and job satisfaction. "With the safety and welfare of our children at stake, we must commit our energy and resources to those who commit themselves to this challenging work" (Bednar, 2003, p.12).

Conceptual Framework

Burnout

Freudenberger was first to mark the phenomenon of burnout in the mid 1970's.

Hebert (1977) reported on the various effects of burnout experienced by workers, including a tendency to be inflexible and closed minded about change or innovation; discussing clients in intellectual and jargon-laden terms, distancing themselves from any emotional involvement and becoming more rigid in their cognitive processes and less capable of adapting to pressures. Burnout can be defined as, "a negative psychological experience that is a reaction of workers to job-related stress" (Acker 1999, p.112).

Maslach & Jackson (1981) defined burnout as a series of discrete syndromes including physical and emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and lowered personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion constitutes the core of the burnout process, it is characterized by a lack of energy and is considered a type of stress reaction (Thoresen, Kaplan, Barsky, Warren & Chermont, 2003).

Burnout is frequently defined in the literature as a series of symptoms which surface when negative work-stress is no longer being effectively managed. There are a multitude of authors who have defined the symptoms of burnout. The following is a summary of the symptoms they have described: varied physical and emotional problems like; addictions, chronic pain, negative attitudes and intentions to quit (Acker, 1999; Drake & Yadama, 1996; Freudenberger, 1974; Freudenberger, 1977; Gold, 1998; Himle, Jayartne & Chess, 1987; Jayartne, Chess & Kunkel, 1986; Koseke & Koseke, 1989;

Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001; Ratliff, 1988; Shannon & Saleebey, 1980; Um & Harrison, 1998), diminished client involvement (Acker, 1999), reduced effectiveness (Daley, 1979; Drake & Yadama, 1996), alcoholism (Shannon & Saleebey, 1980), low morale (Daley, 1979; Drake & Yadama, 1996; Koseke & Koseke, 1989; Shannon & Saleebey, 1980), depersonalization (Acker, 1999; Maslach, et al., 2001) negative attitudes about self and clients (Barrett & McKelvey, 1980), work strain (Himle et al., 1987), reduced job satisfaction (Harrison, 1980; Himle et al., 1987; Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991; Um & Harrison, 1998), absenteeism (Daley, 1979; Holloway & Wallinga 1990; Ratliff, 1988; Shannon & Saleebey, 1980), turnover and job exit (Anderson, 2000; Daley, 1979; Drake & Yadama, 1996; Fryer, Miyoshi & Thomas, 1989; Holloway & Wallinga 1990; Ratliff, 1988.).

Hebert (1977) was first to report that as an occupational hazard, burnout has become an especially critical condition suffered by human service professionals. Human service professionals generally care for and commit themselves to the well being of others. When human service professionals choose to engage empathetically with others they invest themselves personally. Maslach & Jackson (1981) described burnout as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently among individuals who do "people-work." As the emotional resources of human services workers are depleted, they no longer feel able to give of themselves at a psychological level. The result can be cynical attitudes, negative feelings about one's clients (Herbert, 1977; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Maslach, et al., 2001), and a tendency to evaluate oneself negatively, particularly in relation to one's work with clients (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

Many researchers have categorized burnout with human service professionals into two areas: emotional/psychological and physiological symptoms. Emotional/psychological symptoms identified included loss of morale (Koeske & Koeske, 1989), dissatisfaction, hopelessness and helplessness (Herbert, 1977; Holloway & Wallinga, 1990; Ratliff, 1988), detachment (Herbert, 1977; Holloway & Wallinga, 1990) and depression (Holloway & Wallinga, 1990). Physiological symptoms included low energy, chronic fatigue, and weariness (Koeske & Koeske, 1989; Ratliff, 1988),

Burnout should not be confused with other constructs such as compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma or post-traumatic stress syndrome. Trauma symptomology and burnout each have distinct and unique effects (Stevens & Higgins, 2002). Compassion fatigue is the burden felt by those who experience trauma, or from the cumulative effects of vicarious experiences of trauma (Anderson, 2000). Burnout is a unique syndrome. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) measures three individual symptoms of burnout including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996). For the purpose of this study, the MBI - Human Services Survey was utilized, it was designed for use with individuals working in the human services and health care fields where workers interact intensely with other people (Maslach et al., 1996). This scale is the most common measure of burnout.

Job Satisfaction

The concept of job satisfaction is generally used to refer to an effective response to aspects of a job and job experiences (Koeske & Koeske, 1993). Job satisfaction is the

result of the individual's belief that s/he is attaining important values through her/his work, provided these values are compatible with or help to fulfill basic needs. Needs can be both physical and psychological. Harrison (1980) noted that the need for growth is especially important to social workers who are assumed to be highly motivated toward effecting desirable changes. Jayaratne, Himle & Chess (1991) explained that much of the literature on job satisfaction centred around descriptions of characteristics of the work environment which promoted satisfaction and dissatisfaction for the worker. Jayaratne & Chess (1984) argued that different job characteristics, work elements and factors which are identified as having an impact on job satisfaction vary among social workers depending on their work setting. There is, therefore, a need to examine which particular job characteristics may be of significance to workers in one department, but of little relevance to workers in another. Certain job satisfaction factors important to the field of child welfare include: case load size, role clarity/ambiguity, physical comfort, challenge, financial rewards, promotion opportunities (Jayaratne & Chess, 1984), role conflicts (Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Um & Harrison, 1998) and the workers' predictions as to how long they will remain in the position (Harrison, 1980; Mor Barak, Nissly & Levin, 2001).

Factors associated with job dissatisfaction can possibly be determinants of burnout (LeCroy & Rank, 1987). Burnout, however, is not simply a synonym for job dissatisfaction (Jayaratne, Himle & Chess, 1991). In fact, Maslach & Jackson (1981) found "low correlations between measures of job satisfaction and burnout" (p.109). Coping (Um & Harrison, 1998), promotion opportunities, workload, agency change (Jayaratne et al., 1991) and social support (Um & Harrison, 1998) have all been identified

as factors that can mediate the burnout - job satisfaction relationship. Koeske & Koeske (1988) studied the relationships between exhaustion (a facet of burnout), job satisfaction and intention to quit and found a significant relationship. Others have confirmed that burnout leads to job dissatisfaction (Jayaratne, Chess & Kunkel, 1986; Koeske & Koeske, 1993). Mor Barak et al., (2001) postulated that job satisfaction is a consistent predictor of turnover or intent to leave. The precise nature of the relationship between burnout and job satisfaction is debatable and requires further inquiry. There are some researchers who have studied both these concepts simultaneously (Harrison, 1980; Jayaratne et al., 1991; Thoresen et al., 2003). For the purpose of this study, job satisfaction will be measured using the model developed by Quinn in the 1970's as part of a national survey of Quality of Employment (Quinn, Mangione, Seashore, 1973). This tool has been utilized to measure job satisfaction among social workers in other studies (Jayaratne, Himle & Chess, 1991; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Koeske & Kelly, 1995; Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991).

Frontline Workers

This study will focus on frontline workers. They directly manage clients and burnout is said to occur primarily as a function of direct work with clients (Jayaratne et al., 1991). Given the comparative focus of this research, it is necessary to define the various direct service departments and their roles within child welfare. The main direct service departments are Intake, Family Services, Children Services and Resources. For the purpose of this research, frontline workers will include those who provide face-to face services with clients and will exclude clerical, support workers, family visitation and

administrative personnel. Support workers and Family Visitation workers have direct contact with clients, however, they are not child protection workers as defined by the Children and Family Services Act (2000) and do not have client caseloads. Frontline child welfare workers are individuals who are designated as such under the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA), meaning “a person authorized by a Director or local director for the purposes of section 40 (commencing child protection proceedings)” (CFSA, section 37 (1)), who work within a legislated framework as defined by the CFSA (2000). This document uses the terms child welfare workers, child protection worker and child protection practitioners interchangeably. The following is a description of each of the commonly known frontline child protection positions as defined by the Windsor Essex Children’s Aid Society’s job descriptions.

Intake Worker

An Intake Worker is an employee who conducts initial child protection investigations and determines the level of risk to children. When individuals contact the child protection agency, they discuss their concerns with an Intake screener. The Intake screener fields all calls, documents concerns, and assesses the concerns immediately using the provincial eligibility spectrum manual. The eligibility spectrum is the provincial manual used by child protection practitioners to code the concerns in the referrals regarding potential risk to children under several different areas of child protection (i.e., physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, adult conflict in the home, caregiver with a problem, etc.) and outlines which referrals must be investigated. The

Intake worker assesses the child's level of risk and need for protection via the safety and risk assessment tools as outlined by Ministry standards. The need for ongoing agency intervention is then determined. All referrals which meet Ministry eligibility criteria are responded to within a 7-day period as per Ministry regulations. The interventions that the Intake worker performs are directly related to the Ontario Risk Assessment Measure (risk and comprehensive assessment; risk analysis; family plan of service) and The Child and Family Services Act. Services are variable dependent upon the needs of the family. See Appendix A, for a detailed job description.

Family Services Worker

A Family Services worker is an employee who maintains a longer-term caseload of families and children in the short-term legal care and custody of a child welfare agency under the CFSA, where risk to a child(ren) in the family home is identified. Specific areas are identified and goals are determined to lessen the risk of the child(ren) within the family. As well, this worker will assess and address the needs of children who are in the care of the Society either by way of a temporary care agreement or family court order. A Family Services worker will conduct child protection investigations on new information received on an open file and continuously re-assess risk to children. The interventions that the Family Services worker performs are directly related to the Ontario Risk Assessment Measure (risk and comprehensive assessment; risk analysis; family plan of service) and the CFSA. Services are variable dependent upon the needs of the family. See Appendix B, for a detailed job description.

Children Services Worker

A Children Services worker is an employee who maintains a caseload of children who are in the permanent or long-term care and custody of the Society by way of a crown wardship court order under the CFSA. These workers are required to ensure that all the needs of the children are being met while in care. Principal duties include: assisting in preparing older adolescents for eventual independent living, preparing recommendations and documentation for extension of care beyond age 18, assisting in providing services to those children being considered for adoption placements, providing individual supportive counselling where appropriate and acting as guardian and advocate for children in care. Services are variable dependent upon the individual needs of the child. See Appendix C, for a detailed job description.

Resource Worker

A Resource worker is an employee who recruits and assesses potential foster homes using Ministry guidelines, and trains the foster parents. Resource workers maintain a caseload of open foster homes for which they offer support and guidance while children in the care of the CAS are placed in their home. Services are variable dependent upon the individual needs of the child and foster parents. Ministry standards dictate that a home must uphold certain health and safety guidelines and that a Resource worker visits the foster home within seven days of every placement or replacement, and every 90 days while the child is in that home. See Appendix D, for a detailed job description.

Policy and Research Literature Review

The following literature review will include empirical research related to: 1) changing policy and practice contexts with specific references to contemporary changes in the provincial policies and the impact on workload; 2) prevalence of burnout and job satisfaction among child protection workers, and 3) factors associated with burnout and job satisfaction in the field of child welfare.

Changing Policy and Practice Context of Child Protection

In the past several years, significant changes have occurred in the field of child welfare in Ontario. These changes were primarily a response to the tragic deaths of six children who were being served by Children's Aid Societies (CAS(s)) and the recommendations that followed from the Ontario Child Mortality Task Force of 1997, (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS), 1997).

The Conservative Government has introduced a comprehensive Child Welfare Reform Agenda that includes projects and initiatives to improve the ability of CAS(s) and front-line workers to respond to children and their families in need and to increase the capacity of front-line workers to protect children (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS), 2001, p.3).

This new agenda involved a series of new initiatives including: amendments to the Child and Family Services Act; the implementation of a standardized risk assessment model in

all CAS(s); the introduction of new standards for the investigation and management of protection cases, a review of the Ministry's accountability relationship with CAS(s), the design of a Child Welfare Information System, training and capacity building for board members and the introduction of a new funding framework (OACAS, 2001) which resulted in additional funding. In March 2001, the provincial government announced an increased investment of \$123 million in child protection (OACAS, 2001). The government responded to these reports by implementing the Child Welfare Reform Agenda (Bill 6, 1999). It was a more comprehensive approach to enhance the protection of children at risk of abuse or neglect in Ontario. Soon thereafter it became clear that there was a need to review the initiatives and the Workload Measurement Project was initiated. The Workload Measurement Project was introduced in order to explore gaps that seemed to be developing between the recommendations that had been made for better services to vulnerable children and the practical realities of frontline child protection practice. The Workload Measurement Project report explained that new initiatives have resulted in:

Increased number of referrals coming from (the) community,
 required more intensive service to clients, added more
 accountability and documentation steps for front-line workers,
 required the learning of new skills or new information in order
 to do the job... (And) these new initiatives have increased
 demands for service and consequently, the workloads of front-
 line workers (OACAS, 2001, p.11).

One of the findings of the workload study was that the actual time taken to complete required tasks was greater than the staffing and workload benchmarks contained in the Ministry of Community and Children Services (Ministry) funding framework (OACAS, 2001). Further funding problems were caused by the fact that staff salaries were not fully covered by the Ministry funding framework. As well, the Ministry underestimated the time and energy social workers spend in their daily routines. Its benchmarks then that were used for calculating funding for child protection agencies (e.g., that would allow the hiring of new staff) were also underestimates. While the province calculated that an intake investigation and assessment takes an average of 12.5 hours, the study found that they actually take about 19.5 hours (Regehr et al., 2000). In light of such policy changes that were meant to improve the quality of services provided to the children of Ontario can be seen to quite naturally lead to burnout and lower job satisfaction among child welfare workers. The added burden of the expectations set out in the amended CFSA can be viewed as factors that may lead to burnout and job dissatisfaction among this workforce.

A growing number of social work graduates are turning their backs on child protection work, which is legendary for being stressful and has been excoriated in the media over the past several years with several high-profile inquests into the deaths of babies on Children's Aid Society caseloads (Philp, 2001).

This seems to define a need for new studies of burnout and job satisfaction in this field. From 1998 to 1999, prior to the full implementation of the new legislation and standardized risk assessments, the total expenditure for Children's Aid Societies (CAS(s)

n Ontario was \$542 000 000. In comparison, from 2002 to 2003 the total budget was \$974 000 000, (OACAS, 2003). Overall there has been a 56% increase in the total number of full time equivalent staff members (OACAS, 2003). This increase in budgets and workers would probably have been a good resolution to child protection problems, however, at the same time the province experienced an overwhelming increase in open investigations, open ongoing family service files and of children in Society care. In 1998, there were a total of 11 609 children in the care of Ontario CAS(s), on March 31, 2003 there were 18 126 (OACAS, 2003). There has been a 47% increase in investigations done by Intake and Family Services workers of possible child abuse/neglect since the 1998-1999 year end (OACAS, 2003). These increases have put added strain not only on the child protection system, but on the frontline staff doing the work.

Burnout and Job Satisfaction Among Child Protection Workers

A study by Regehr et al. (2000) found that child protection work is one of the most demanding jobs. Anderson (1996) reported that burnout was more common among child protection workers than any other social work profession. Burnout in child protection workers is commonly associated with a range of negative effects, including a loss of concern for the welfare of clients, poor work quality, emotional isolation, high absenteeism, low morale, increased substance abuse and poor health (Drake & Yadama, 1996). There is a consensus within the field that child protection workers are seriously overworked (Anderson, 2000; Daley, 1979; Harrison, 1980; Regehr, Leslie & Howe, 2000). Their decisions made to protect children are criticized by the public, other

professionals and by affected parents. Burnout is a product of this stressful environment (Fryer, Miyoshi & Thomas, 1989).

Child welfare workers have shown more depersonalization, less worker comfort, more role ambiguity and conflict, and more value conflict than workers in family services agencies or community mental health settings (Jayaretne & Chess, 1984). Caseloads in child welfare are considered high and difficult to manage (Jayaretne & Chess, 1984; Regehr, Leslie & Howe, 2000). Child welfare workers are under greater stress than their social work colleagues engaged in other fields of practice (Anderson, 2000; Jayaretne & Chess, 1985). Child protection workers are designated to fulfill a myriad of demanding and important roles and as such, "the problem of job satisfaction and burnout among these workers has received increased attention" (Harrison, 1980, p.31). The following is a review of past research done in the field of child protection on burnout and job satisfaction which may be used for comparison with this study's findings.

Sharma, McKeley, Hardy, Epstein, Lomax, & Hruby (1997) studied job satisfaction among child protection workers, focussing on whether satisfaction varied with job position. They found that workers' positions within the organization did not seem to affect workers' satisfaction with most aspects of their jobs. They concluded that scant research has examined to what extent worker attributes or their agency positions determine their level of job satisfaction (Sharma et al., 1997). This study aims to begin to fill this important gap.

Jayaratne and Chess (1984), did a National survey of 288 social workers in the United States. They included child welfare workers ($n = 60$), family services workers (n

= 84), and community mental health workers (N= 144). The study found no significant differences in levels of job satisfaction and stress/burnout between the three groups of social workers. Its authors surmised that various job characteristics were weighted differently by social workers depending upon their respective fields of practice. Among their findings was that job satisfaction is clearly determined by organizational attributes such as challenge, promotional opportunity, workload, agency change and role ambiguity (Jayaratne & Chess, 1984). These investigators surmised that organizational factors play a significant role in feelings of job satisfaction and burnout.

Correlates of Burnout and Job Satisfaction

The current study will evaluate the associations between department worked and burnout and job satisfaction. In order to understand the true strength of these relationships, potential covariates must be accounted for. Next, the correlates/ predictors of burnout and job satisfaction among child protection workers found in previous research will be reviewed. These identified correlates will then be used in the development of this study's quantitative and qualitative analytic plans.

A total of 57 correlates of burnout and 27 correlates of job satisfaction have been identified. Given such a substantial number of relevant factors, various investigators have attempted to organize them into categories. Three such categories are predominant in this field's research literature and are suggested as central dimensions of both job satisfaction and burnout (Jayaratne & Chess, 1991) they are: individual worker attributes (Anderson, 2000; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Jayaratne et al., 1986; Jayaratne et al., 1991;

Maslach, et al., 2001; Ratliff, 1988; Regehr et al., 2001; Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991), organizational attributes (Anderson, 2000; Bell, Kulkarni & Dalton, 2003; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Jayaratne et al., 1991; Koeske & Koeske, 1995; Maslach, et al., 2001; Ratliff, 1988; Rooney & Leslie, 2004; Regehr, et al., 2001; Sharma et al., 1997) and client attributes (Anderson, 2000; Jayaratne & Chess, 1991; Jayaratne, et al., 1991; Maslach, et al., 2001; Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991). These three categories (worker, organizational and client attributes) will be adopted here as a means of organizing the literature on the correlates of burnout and job satisfaction.

Worker Attributes

Some of the factors identified as correlates to burnout and job satisfaction are directly related to the individual, they are referred to in this study as worker attributes. Below is a review of the literature identifying worker attributes as key correlates to burnout and job satisfaction.

Hollaway & Wallinga (1990) found major sources of burnout included basic demographic and personality characteristics that the individual brought to the job. These characteristics can affect how individuals will cope with stress, thus impacting burnout and job satisfaction levels. Some researchers have found that gender was related to stress symptoms and burnout among social workers (Anderson, 1996; Himle et al., 1987; Lewandowski, 2003; Ratliff, 1988). Himle and colleagues (1987) used the MBI to study gender differences in burnout among clinical social workers and reported that females scored significantly higher on the Emotional Exhaustion subscale of the MBI than their

male counterparts (Maslach et al., 2001). Furthermore, the reported sources of work stress and the manner of complaining about them seems also to differ between the genders (Himle et al., 1987). Men and women were found to cope differently, therefore the findings suggested that coping styles and techniques may buffer burnout. In the study conducted by Himle et al. (1987) more men than woman were married, suggesting that spousal support may serve to protect against burnout. Lewandowski (2003) reported that both age and gender have been associated with burnout. This finding was supported when Maslach and her colleagues did a review of burnout factors in 2001 and reported that younger individuals and females were more prone to burnout. It is possible, however, that a relative lack of experience may explain the seemingly more prevalent burnout among younger workers (Lewandowski, 2003). Jayaratne et al. (1991) also examined relationships between child welfare worker burnout, job satisfaction and worker attributes. Worker attributes in their study found to be significant included, skills/competence, value conflict, commitment, personal control and self-esteem. An earlier study by Jayaratne et al. (1986) identified burnout as being associated with anxiety, depression, irritability and psychosomatic complaints. Workers suffering from psychological strain become irritable and depressed and more susceptible to burnout and job dissatisfaction. According to Meier (1997), social workers who are most vulnerable to burnout and job dissatisfaction are those whose self-esteem is primarily founded on their feelings of professional effectiveness.

When compared with other social workers, child protection workers demonstrated greater levels of role ambiguity (when the role occupant lacks the information necessary

to perform the role) and role conflict (i.e., reconciling the conflicting roles of social support and social control) which have been identified as significant predictors of burnout (Bidgood & Hemsworth, 2002; Daley, 1979; Harrison, 1980; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Jayaratne et al., 1991; Koseke & Koseke, 1989; Maslack & Jackson, 1981; Maslach, et al., 2001; Ratliff, 1988; Shannon & Saleebey, 1980). Harrison (1980) found that worker autonomy (i.e. individual authority over one's position, opportunity for independent thought, participation in decision making) was an important correlate of job satisfaction and burnout. A reduced sense of personal and professional accomplishment (Bell et al., 2003; Harrison, 1980; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Koseke & Koseke, 1989; Maslach, et al., 2001) have also been reported as significant correlates of job satisfaction and burnout.

The literature on job satisfaction and burnout clearly established the significance of worker attributes as important factors in predicting burnout and job satisfaction levels among child protection workers. "It is apparent that personal characteristics account for a large proportion of the variance" of worker stress (Jayaratne et al., 1991 p.257). This study will assess key personal characteristics of workers in the frontline child welfare departments. Exploration of the potential confounding or modifying effects of such personal attributes of participating workers may allow for more complex insights into any observed department-burnout or department-job satisfaction relationships.

Organizational Attributes

Bell, Kulkarni & Dalton (2003) explained that “organizations can either promote job satisfaction or contribute to burnout” (p.463). Dane (2000) studied the nature and impact of secondary trauma on ten child welfare workers in five different offices of the same child welfare agency, they all identified agency and office working conditions as significant stressors. Large caseloads have often been observed as associated with high levels of stress and burnout (Ratliff, 1988; Regehr et al., 2000; Yadama & Drake, 1995). Heavy workloads will place the social worker under stress and at risk for emotional exhaustion (Koeske & Koeske, 1989; Maslach et al., 2001). Koeske & Koeske (1989) used structural equation modeling to test the effect that workload has on burnout and work related stress. Their model demonstrated that strain is the outcome of different sources of stress in the work environment which in turn generates negative outcomes such as burnout and low job satisfaction. The study reported that the likelihood of work stressors leading to negative outcomes can be buffered by such factors as social support and personal accomplishments (Koeske & Koeske, 1989).

Some have noted that the overall number of clients served is only a relative indicator of demands upon workers, and have instead explored specific components of workload (i.e., risk level of cases, number of hours spent on activities) as predictors of burnout (Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Jayaratne et al., 1991; Koseke & Koseke, 1989; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Regehr et al., 2000). Assessments of the amount of time taken for specific work tasks such as direct contact with clients (Himle et al., 1987; Koseke & Koseke, 1989; Um & Harrison, 1998) paperwork (Ratliff, 1988; Regehr et al., 2000) and

after hours work (Anderson, 1996; Anderson, 2000; Masson & Morrison, 1991) have been found to be associated with worker stress and burnout. Masson & Morrison (1991) stated that one contributor to stress for child protection workers is after hours work, which is very stressful due to the unpredictability of being on duty, and therefore being in a constant state of readiness. When workers are required to be emotionally available for long periods of time the potential for burnout increases (Herbert, 1977). The overall quality of the working conditions such as, physical comfort, safety (Acker, 1999; Fryer et al., 1989; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Masson & Morrison, 1991; Regehr et al., 2000), and salary levels for workers (Bell et al., 2003; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Jayaratne et al., 1991; Masson & Morrison, 1991; Yadama & Drake, 1995) have also been connected with worker burnout. The frequency and severity of critical incidents while working, also seem to be meaningful predictors of stress and burnout (Acker, 1999; Anderson, 1996; Regehr et al., 2001). Other elements of the organizational climate that have been reported to be associated with child protection worker and social worker stress/burnout and job satisfaction include the availability of organizational leadership (Bell et al., 2003; Ratliff, 1988), supervision (Rooney & Leslie, 2004), communication (Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Jayaratne et al., 1991) bureaucracy (Ratliff, 1988) and the extensiveness of organizational change within an agency (Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Jayaratne et al., 1991). Acker (1999) observed that the support provided by supervisors and co-workers served as a buffer to burnout. In fact, such social support has been consistently identified as a significant predictor of worker stress and burnout (Himle et al., 1987; Jayaratne et al., 1991; Koseke & Koseke, 1989; Powell, 1994; Rooney & Leslie, 2004; Regehr et al., 2001; Shannon &

Saleebey, 1980). Social support is probably an important determinant of social workers' ability to cope with stressful work situations and derive satisfaction from their jobs.

Distinct pressures can inherently be attached to the job responsibilities of different departments within the same organization. And such different departments within child welfare agencies are represented by varying caseload sizes, types and demands. Furthermore, some of the sources of workplace stress leading to burnout and job dissatisfaction probably originate within the organization, however, at the same time individual characteristics probably contribute to workers' ability to cope with these sorts of stressors (Lewandowski, 2003). Further research on the relationship of organizational attributes with burnout and job satisfaction and the varying roles of workers within child welfare organizations seems warranted. This study is expected to contribute to this knowledge on relative weightiness of diverse personal and organizational factors in child welfare.

Client Attributes

Koeske & Koeske (1989) said that burnout "can be redefined ... as strain that results from client involvement" (p.248). Intake workers are involved with families for brief periods, often during times of crisis. Family Services workers may have years of extended involvement with hostile, angry parents. In contrast, the child is the only client of a Children Services worker, while Resource workers focus primarily on supporting the child within the foster home. Given the diversity of clients within the field of child protection, this area ought to be further explored because it also may explain some of the

differences in burnout and job satisfaction between the direct service workers of different child welfare departments. Conventional practice wisdom supports that some clients are more challenging to serve than others. Despite this, client factors have received relatively little attention in the research on burnout among child welfare workers (Bidgood & Hemsworth, 2002). Freudenberger (1977) discussed how specific types of clients may contribute to greater levels of stress and burnout among workers, including: clients from different cultures, the severely disturbed, and volatile or aggressive clients who induce fear in workers. Other researchers have identified involuntary clients as providing relatively more stress and burnout (Gold, 1998; Jayaratne et al., 1991; Maslach et al., 2001; Regehr et al., 2000). Acker's 1999 study found that social worker's involvement with clients with mental illness was a major contributor to job dissatisfaction and burnout. Regehr et al. (2001) found that characteristics such as clients' threats and assaultive behaviour were significantly related to post-traumatic stress responses among child welfare workers. Risk levels are assessed to each child protection case in Ontario under the Standardized Risk Assessment Model, conventional wisdom holds that those clients which are rated as high or moderately high risk may be more stressful to work with. Furthermore, there is increased chance for burnout and lowered job satisfaction when the worker feels there is minimal observable change or that the length of time for change to occur with children and families served is too long, (Daley, 1979; Freudenberger, 1977, Ratliff, 1988). On the other hand, Jayarante et al. (1991) found that client characteristics were not prominent predictors of job satisfaction and burnout among child protection workers. There is no consensus among the few relevant studies

regarding client factors on burnout and therefore there is a need for further research on them. Workers within the main frontline child welfare departments are involved with diverse clients for varying periods of time. Such factors may account for differential levels of stress and burnout between the frontline departments. Thus, they will also be incorporated into this study.

These then are the main categorical correlates/determinants of burnout and job satisfaction that have thus far been identified in this field's research literature: attributes of child welfare workers themselves, of the organizations in which they work, and of the clients they aim to serve. In addition to being associated with this study's hypothesized dependent measures (burnout and job satisfaction), it is possible that many such attributes of workers, child welfare organizations and clients may also be associated with its centrally hypothesized independent variable - departments themselves. Recall that each frontline child welfare department is a unique place; with unique child protection mandates and therefore, unique roles required of its workers. In addition to answering its primary research questions concerning differences between frontline child welfare departments on burnout and job satisfaction, this study secondarily aims to advance understandings about the relative weightiness of worker, organizational and client factors in explaining any such observed departmental differences.

Methodology

Research Questions

This study was designed to compare the levels of burnout and job satisfaction between the different departments of frontline child protection agencies and to explore workers perceptions of the possible sources of stress/burnout and job satisfaction. The research attempts to answer a number of questions. They are as follows.

1. Are there any differences in burnout levels between departments?
2. Are there any differences in job satisfaction levels between departments?
3. What do the workers of each department identify as being major causes of burnout?
4. What do the workers of each department identify as being main sources of job satisfaction?
5. What are their proposed solutions to address burnout?
6. What are their proposed solutions for increasing job satisfaction?

Major Research Design Type

The study used a mixed, cross-sectional design that included the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 1994). Such a survey typically collects data at one point in time from a randomly selected sample of people (Creswell, 1994). The

quantitative portion of the study will produce data on levels of burnout and job satisfaction that were analysed statistically, while the qualitative portion provided the kind of narrative detail that could enrich this study's interpretations, making them more practically meaningful for child protection practitioners and policy makers. This study's multiple data collection methods provided opportunities for convergent validation (Posavac & Carey, 1997). That is, the central research questions were answered/explored with both quantitative and qualitative methods. Any of this study's developed ideas may be thought to have been convergently validated if the corresponding quantitative and qualitative inferences are systematic replicates of one another.

Setting

This study was conducted in the county of Essex in the province of Ontario, at the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society (WECAS) during the months of September and October, 2004. Child protection agencies in this province are mandated through the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA) and governed by the Ministry of Community and Children Services. The WECAS has a board of directors that oversees all programming and budgeting. The main office is located in the city of Windsor and there is a satellite office in the town of Leamington.

There are certain characteristics of this agency that may be unique. First, and probably most importantly, the agency was significantly "restructured" recently. The restructuring decision was made by senior management and the board in late 2003, and was fully implemented by mid January of 2004. The changes made are as follows.

- The agency eliminated all protection support positions as they are not accounted for in the provincial funding framework. These positions had existed in the Intake and Family Services departments and served to support children and families as well as the frontline protection workers in reducing child abuse and neglect risk among client families. These positions were mostly held by individuals with Child and Youth Care Diplomas. The Family Support workers worked directly with parents and children in the family home.
- The Family Services department was enlarged in an effort to reduce rising case loads. The previous protection support positions as well as some previous Children Services workers were added to the complement of frontline child protection workers in the Family Services department. Therefore, in January of 2004, previous protection support workers, and some Children Services workers became Family Services workers.
- In terms of some of the findings in this study it is interesting to note that with the exception of one individual, those Children Services workers who were transferred to the Family Services department were those with the least amount of experience in that previous department.
- The Children Services department became more specialized. This department now only services those children in the long-term care and custody of WECAS, creating a change within this department's roles and responsibilities.
- The positions within the Resources department also changed. Some of the positions within that department became more generic in that there was no longer

a separation between those workers who supported foster homes and those that completed home study assessments for potential foster parents and provisional foster parents. A foster parent may be a resource for any child entering the care of the Society and having been approved as per Ministry guidelines while a provisional foster home, is a temporary placement for a specific child and guidelines for these placements are less rigorous.

- Prior to January, 2004 Family Services workers only managed family files and transferred the child in care files of children entering the care of the Society to Children Services. After the restructuring, Family Services case loads included child in care files for those children (within the families they are serving) entering the care of the Society on a temporary or short-term basis under the CFSA.

Other factors that require mention either due to their uniqueness to this agency or due to their mention by the study participants include this agency's afterhours work program. Child welfare agencies in Ontario must be accessible at all times. To accommodate the overnight hours, weekends and holidays the WECAS is staffed by regular frontline workers who volunteer to participate in the program. These workers are paid stipends in addition to their regular wages in that such work is in addition to their regular, full-time day shifts. Another significant event that may have had an impact on these study participants' perceptions was WECAS' institution of a new computer software program - Matrix. This child welfare specific software was implemented first within the Intake and Family Services departments in September of 2004. It should probably also be noted that in late 2002 staff moved from three different work site locations to a new building that

now houses the entire staff with the exception of those in the Leamington satellite office.

Sample

All frontline, case carrying, child protection workers at the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society (WECAS) who were actively employed during the months of September and October of 2004 were invited to participate in the study. Workers who chose to participate in the research were provided with a survey package including a letter of information (see Appendix E) that described the purpose, potential benefits and procedures that would be utilized in the study. The subjects were also provided a consent form (Appendix F) that clearly outlined that their participation was voluntary, confidential and that they could choose to withdraw at any time. Surveys did not include names nor any other personal characteristics, and study data was analysed and findings reported in aggregate so that no study participant's identity could be inferred. To ensure such participant anonymity, blind data coders and analysts were used (an undergraduate research assistant and the thesis chair). This research proposal was reviewed and cleared by the University of Windsor Ethics Committee (see Appendix G) and the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society's Board of Directors (see Appendix H).

This study used a purposive sampling. It was purposive in that the choice of agency was based upon the criteria of convenience and economy as well as the desire to create practically meaningful, locally relevant knowledge that might directly affect this community and agency. The use of such an accessible sample seems quite defensible (Creswell, 1994). The student researcher was an employee of WECAS at the time this

study was accomplished. As such, there were a number of benefits, including knowledge of the work; easy and open access to the facilities and staff; and support from frontline workers; management and the board of directors. A total sample size of 112 frontline child protection workers was solicited for this study. This sample size compares favourably with other child protection research studying burnout and job satisfaction (ranged from 75 to 112; Harrison, 1980; Koeske and Koeske, 1993; Jayaratne et al., 1986).

Data Collection

The principal data collection strategy involved the completion of a questionnaire by direct service child welfare personnel. This instrument was specifically developed for the investigation and included demographic and work history information such as age, gender, department working, level of education and years of experience (see Personal Inventory, Appendix I); a series of questions designed to assess workers' perceptions about their work, including the use of two established psychometric instruments: The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996) and the job satisfaction portion of the Quality of Employment Survey (Quinn, Mangione & Seashore, 1973) (see Study Survey, Appendix J). The questionnaire also included a series of open-ended qualitative questions (see Questionnaire, Appendix K). The questions were devised to elicit workers' perceptions about the aspects of their employment that contribute to or mediate burnout and job satisfaction. Workers perceptions about the efficacy of organizational and departmental efforts to reduce burnout and enhance job

satisfaction were also elicited.

Instruments

Personal Inventory

Demographic and work history information was gathered with the Personal Inventory that was specifically developed for this study. Refer to Table 1 for a full list of variables gathered by the inventory. The inventory was estimated to take five minutes to complete.

Maslach Burnout Inventory

The Maslach Burnout Inventory - Human Services Survey (MBI) was used to assess burnout among child protection workers. The MBI consists of 25 items that are rated on a 7 point likert scale. The instrument measures three discrete dimensions of burnout including Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (DP), and Personal Accomplishment (PA). Maslach et al. (1986) described EE as “feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one’s work” (p.4), it is measured with nine items and its theoretical scores range from nine to sixty-three. Higher scores on the EE scale are keyed toward burnout. EE represents how emotionally drained and exhausted one feels regarding work. Maslach et al. (1986) reported that DP is “an unfeeling and impersonal response toward the recipients of one’s care” (p.4), it is measured by five items and theoretical scores for this subscale range from five to thirty five. And higher

Table 1: Independent Variables gathered from the Personal Inventory

Worker Attributes	Organizational Attributes	Client Attributes
Gender	Department worked	Risk level of cases
Age	Number of files	
Education	Number of court files	
Marital status	Afterhours Work	
Children	Afterhours shifts	
Residency		
Travel distance to work		
Amount of sick days		
Use of stress leave		
Length of stress leave		
Thoughts to leave WECAS		
Thoughts to leave department		
Experience with child welfare		
Experience with WECAS		
Experience with current department		

scores are keyed toward burnout. DP represents how detached workers feel from their clients. PA is described by Maslach et al. (1986) as “feelings of competence and successful achievement in one’s work with people” (p. 4), it is measured by eight items, and theoretical scores for this subscale range from eight to forty-eight with low scores keyed toward burnout. PA measures the degree that workers feel they make a difference. Drake and Yadama (1996) found that levels of EE and DP are greater among burned-out workers, and PA is lower among them.

The version of the MBI used is specific to human service workers and is entitled “The Human Services Survey”. It is estimated to take twenty minutes to complete. Internal consistency reliabilities for the three subscales are moderate to high (EE - .90; DP - .79; PA - .71,). Past research has reported sufficient levels of reliability and validity. The MBI has been demonstrated to significantly correlate with second party behavioural ratings of burnout, job satisfaction, absenteeism, physical and relational difficulties, expressed intention to leave one’s job (Maslach et al., 1981) and job exit among child protection workers (Drake & Yadama, 1996). The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) has been the most frequently used measure of burnout in prior research with social workers (Anderson, 2000; Drake & Yadama, 1996; Jayaratne, Himle & Chess, 1991; Jayratne & Chess, 1984; Jayratne & Chess, 1991; Koeske & Koeske, 1989; Lecroy & Rank, 1987; Powell, 1994; Um & Harrison, 1998).

Job Satisfaction Survey

Job Satisfaction was measured with both the single-item and full measure from

the instrument used by Quinn & Baldi de Mandilovitch (1977); Quinn, Mangione & Seashore (1973) and, Quinn & Staines (1978) in their national American surveys of quality of employment. The measure has been widely used in national surveys of job satisfaction and has a reliability coefficient of .77 (Jayaratne et al., 1991). This global approach to measuring job satisfaction uses general questions regarding the job without reference to any specific job facet to assess employees overall perception of their work. This measure of job satisfaction was chosen due to its short length, as it was important to keep the survey small in order to not discourage potential study participants. This measure is estimated to take five minutes to complete. For the purposes of this study, both the entire Job Satisfaction measure of The Quality of Employment Survey and the single-item measure were used. The full scale included six global job satisfaction questions with theoretical scores ranging from one to four. Higher scores are keyed toward job satisfaction (Jayaratne et al., 1991). The single-item measure has been widely used in national surveys involving social workers (Koeske & Kelly; 1994; Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991).

Questionnaire

The survey included a qualitative component comprised of a series of open-ended questions designed to assess workers' perceptions about the contributors to and mediators of burnout and lack of job satisfaction among child protection practice. The survey posed such questions as: what aspects of your position are the most stressful; what helps you to deal with or reduce stress in your job; what efforts has the agency made to reduce your

stress; have these been effective; and what do you think should be done to reduce stress/burnout among child protection workers? Insights gained here from the aggregate hundreds of years of practice experience of this study's participants might ultimately assist in enhancing retention, recruitment and the emotional well-being of child protection practitioners by identifying additional strategies that could be used to recruit, support and retain the next generation in child protection workers.

To assure the dependability of the qualitative analyses an informed external auditor was used. Qualitative dependability mirrors the quantitative concept of reliability that is essentially concerned with consistency and predictability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The external auditor, a social work academic with child welfare practice experience and with ten years of qualitative research experience, was available for consultation through this study. He reviewed all of the methodological processes to ensure that they conformed to generally accepted qualitative research practices. He then reviewed the study questionnaire and the transcripts of participant responses. Working with the student researcher, the auditor performed qualitative dependability analysis, ensuring that the codes, categories and ultimately themes, that were being developed were representative of the child protection workers experiences.

Procedures

Child protection workers often suffer from stress and burnout because they are busy and feel they do not have enough time in a work day to complete essential tasks. Persuading workers to take time away from their important daily responsibilities to

participate in this study was a concern. Strategies were incorporated that might maximize their participation. Every effort was made to schedule survey completion sessions at the convenience of the workers. The instrument was administered on-site during ten scheduled sessions in order to maximize worker participation. Information sessions were included as part of the agendas of regular team and department meetings. Participants completed the surveys at their convenience. During the survey dissemination sessions the research was described and the survey packages were explained. The informed consent form was shared and consents were signed and collected. Subjects were provided with the survey package and an envelope in which to seal their completed packages. The surveys were then collected over a four week period via a drop-off box. The estimated amount of time needed to complete the study (20 to 45 minutes) was provided and allowed for the workers to schedule time to complete the survey. The agency's frontline supervisors were enlisted to periodically remind workers about survey dissemination sessions. At each such session, the researcher attempted to convey her desire to acquire field based knowledge and to promote an atmosphere of mutual learning between research participant and the researcher.

Data Analysis

This study involved the use of "between methods" that draws on the complementary strengths of qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell, 1994). This method has been described as triangulation, the assumption being that the bias inherent in a particular data analytic method may be largely neutralized when used in conjunction

with another very different data analytic method (Creswell, 1994). An outline of specific data analytic methods used in this study is represented below. Dependent variables were the three measures of burnout (emotional exhaustion (EE), depersonalization (DP) and personal accomplishment (PA)); and the two measures of job satisfaction (the single-item measure and full scale measure). The main independent variable was department. Other independent variables tested for their relationships with burnout, job satisfaction and departments were chosen either due to their relevance in the research literature or their variability between departments (See Table 1).

Analysis of the quantitative data

To answer the central research question, the frontline departments were compared on three measures of burnout and two measures of job satisfaction using analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical tests. The ANOVA test was used to determine the statistical significance of mean score differences of burnout and job satisfaction levels among the different departments (Creswell, 1994). However, in two instances of testing between-group departmental differences on key dependent measures (depersonalization, SD 's ranged from 4.2 (Intake) to 7.8 (Children Services); $F(2, 103) = 6.28, p < .01$; and personal accomplishment, $F(2, 103) = 2.48, p < .10$) the ANOVA homogeneity of variance assumption was violated. So the chi-square test was conducted in an effort to evaluate the relationship between burnout, job satisfaction and department as well as with other potential predictors to burnout and job satisfaction other than department. The chi-square is a distribution-free procedure which requires very limited assumptions about the

distribution of the data (Norusis, 1991). "The chi-square test helps us decide whether two variables are related in the population" (Norusis, 1991, p. 271), and is based on a comparison of observed frequencies with expected frequencies (Norusis, 1991).

Using chi-square analysis, associations between the independent variables were examined. This provided additional predictive knowledge of how department worked impacted on burnout, by examining the characteristics of the frontline workers as they are associated with each other and the outcome variables. The strength of predictor and dependent variable association is described with prevalence ratios.

Combinations of predictors were entered into logistic regression models to determine their relative predictive ability in determining burnout. It was first determined if there is a relationship between predictors and outcome variables (Weinbach & Grinnell, 2001). Predictors were added to the models based on their statistical significance and practical (clinical) importance. Two models were developed for the purpose of determining the strength of the relationship of department and other predictors with outcome variables. Variables were entered by forced entry methods.

Analysis of the qualitative data

In an effort to further understand the experiences of this sample, open-ended questions were added to the survey. The answers to these questions were analysed using grounded theory; theory that was derived from data, systematically gathered and analysed through the research process (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The qualitative component of the survey was transcribed using word processing software (Word Perfect for Windows 10)

and the resultant transcripts were analysed for recurrent themes, differences and correlates between departments as it related to burnout and job satisfaction.

The analysis included coding and developing category systems with the data. It is here that the data was carefully read, and re-read, line by line and divided into meaningful analytical segments. Concepts were classified to create categories. This classification is discovered when concepts are compared against one another and appear to pertain to a similar phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). These segments were then coded.

“Coding represents the operations by which data are broken down (and) conceptualized” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.57). One method of coding data is referred to as open coding. Open coding as described by Strauss and Corbin (1990) involves “the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data” (p. 61). This procedure of breaking down text into components and labelling and categorizing them, or decontextualizing data, was employed in this study. Strauss and Corbin (1990) explained that this model typically applies labels that are taken from the words used by the subjects and uses classification of concepts to create categories. Coding for this project was organized by color coding the segments of data and assigning category labels. This process was continued until all the data was coded. This resulted in subcategories which were then defined by major themes. A master copy of the color coded segmented data as well as a master list of all subcategories and major themes was maintained by the researcher.

Once the initial coding of data was completed, the data was summarized by describing the themes and categories which emerged. Some of the analysis also included

determining differences and similarities of what workers in each of the departments identified as being positive and negative work related factors. For this purpose some of the questions were analysed by enumeration. Enumeration is the process of quantifying data (Bullock, Little & Millham, 1995). With this project, this was achieved by calculating the number of times codes were applied to the data. Each code was used only once per subject, regardless of how many times the same subject may have commented on the same theme. The questions were first analysed individually. In order to demonstrate relationships within the overall assessment of the data, the use of figures was incorporated.

Mixing of quantitative and qualitative paradigms is used when the research need is for both an assessment of the extent and nature of the problem and an explanation as to why the problem exists (Bullock et al., 1995). Bullock and his colleagues further report that a study may be limited by seeking a definitive quantitative or qualitative approach for a particular research question and the data collected may be analysed in a variety of methods (Bullock et al., 1995). It is the fact that qualitative and quantitative research approaches both have strengths and weaknesses that supports the rationale for integrating them (Bryman, 1996). The current study used mixed-methodological design where the researcher collected and analysed both quantitative and qualitative data and both themes and statistical analysis were used (Creswell, 1994).

Results

This section will provide socio-demographic as well as child protection work history data for the study sample. Descriptive statistics as well comparative analysis will be discussed as they relate to the three aspects of burnout and both job satisfaction measures used. Information regarding the key dependent variables and how they relate to the main independent variables of department worked will be explored using crosstabulations. Finally, logistic regression analysis was used to further assess the strength of the department worked to the main dependent variables.

Response Rate

The population sampled consisted of 170 frontline workers at the time that this study was undertaken. There were 112 surveys returned. This sample compares favourably with other child protection research studying burnout and/or job satisfaction (Harrison (1980) used $N = 112$, Koeske and Koeske's (1993) with $N = 91$, and Jayaratne et al. (1986) with $N = 75$). This study had an overall response rate of 65.9% which compares well with other research done in Ontario in the field of child welfare (Regehr et al., 2000 with a 30% response rate and Rooney & Leslie, 2004 reporting a 40% response rate) and other research done on burnout and job satisfaction among social workers (Koeske & Kelly, 1995 reported a 57% response rate).

As this study planned to compare departments, it is important to examine participation rates as they relate to the individual frontline departments. The population of frontline workers at WECAS consisted of the Intake department, where in September,

2004, there was a total of 38 workers, Family Services with 97 workers, Children Services had 22 and Resources had 13 workers. This study had response rates of 76.3% for Intake, 67.0% for Family Services, Children Services had 54.5% and Resources with a 46.2% response rate; $\chi^2(3, N = 170) = 5.5, ns$.

Demographic Background

The 112 frontline child protection workers from WECAS surveyed for this study are described by central personal characteristics consisting of gender, age, education, marital status, whether or not they have children, department they work and travel distance to work. Key job related factors were also described such as work with the afterhours program, level of experience, amount of sick days used and use of stress leave. As presented in Table 2, the sample consisted of mostly women ($n = 95$), with men representing less than a quarter of the sample ($n = 16$). More than one half of the sample was thirty five years of age or younger (64.9%). Just over half of the sample was married ($n = 57$) and more than half ($n = 63$) had children. Most study participants live within the city of Windsor ($n = 77$), and most (72.3%) travel less than 20 km to work.

Twenty-nine study participants work in the Intake Department, 65 in Family Services, 12 in Children Services and 6 with the Resource Department, see Table 3. Almost the entire sample had some years of university education ($n = 100$), and more than half ($n = 65$), had a Bachelor in Social Work degree. The range of child welfare work experience for this sample ranged from less than a month to 25 years, with the majority (61.6%) having three years experience or less. See Table 4 for details around education

Table 2: Study Participants' Demographic Profile (Percentage Distributions, $N = 112$)

Characteristic	%	Median	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Range
Gender					
Female	85.6				
Male	14.4				
Age					
Less than 30	27.9				
30-34 years	32.5				
35-44 years	20.7				
45 or older *	18.9				
		32.0	35.0	8.6	23-56
Marital Status					
Single	25.0				
Married	50.9				
Common-law	13.4				
Separated or divorced	10.7				
Number of Children					
0	43.8				
1	33.3				
2	44.4				
3	17.5				
4-5	4.8				
		2.0**	2.0**	0.9**	1-5**
Residence					
Windsor	68.8				
Leamington	2.7				
Outside	28.6				
Travel Distance to Work					
Less than 5 km	17.0				
6-14 km	38.4				
15-24 km	23.2				
25 or more	21.4				
		13.0	17.0	14.8	1-75

Note:

* Only one study participant was over the age of 55 (56 years of age)

** Distribution of children was among the 63 study participants (56.3%) with children.

Table 3: Distribution of Study Participants by Department

Position	number	%
Intake	29	27.4
Family Service	65	61.3
Children Services	12	11.3
Resources	6	5.4

Table 4: Descriptive Profile of Study Participants' Education and Child Welfare Experience (Percentage Distributions)

Characteristic	%	Median	Mean	SD	Range
Years of University Education *					
2-3	9.8				
4	33.1				
5-6	38.4				
7-9	18.7				
		5.0	4.9	1.4	2-9
Educational Credentials **					
Diploma or Certificate	9.9				
B.A.	20.7				
B.S.W.	58.6				
M.A.	3.6				
M.S.W.	7.2				
Years of Child Welfare Experience					
Less than 2 years	17.0				
2-3	30.3				
4-9	40.2				
10 or more	12.5				
		4.0	5.5	5.5	0-25

Note:

* Distribution among those study participants (94.6%) with some university education.

** Only one study participant claimed to have no such credentials.

and practice experience. Table 5 outlines the staff participants' use of sick days and stress leave within their child welfare career. As reported by the study participants, most (85.7%) utilized less than 10 sick days a year with the average being 4.4 ($SD = 4.1$) sick days a year. A stress leave was reportedly used by eight of the participants in the sample.

Table 6 displays information regarding agency afterhours work. From this sample, 23 of the study participants work with the afterhours program. Of those 23, they worked a range of 1 to 48 ($SD = 12.0$) shifts a year.

Table 5: Descriptive Profile of Study Participants' Education and Child Welfare Work Experience (Percentage Distributions)

Characteristic	%	Median	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Range
Sick Days per year					
None	16.0				
1-4.9	39.7				
5-9	31.1				
10 or more	13.2				
		3.0	4.4	4.1	0-18
Ever Used a Stress Leave *					
yes	7.5				
No	92.9				

Note:

* Range from 1 to 575 days among the eight study participants who took such leave (Median = 195 days).

Table 6: Study Participants After Hours Work (Percentage Distributions)

Characteristic	%	Median	Mean	SD	Range
Currently Working Afterhours					
yes	20.8				
Afterhours Shifts per Year					
1	14.3				
2-4	9.5				
5-19	47.6				
20 or more	28.6				
		12.0	14.4	12.0	1-48

Burnout and Job Satisfaction

Burnout levels were obtained by acquiring three separate scores, one score for each of the dimensions of burnout (EE, DP and PA). Scores were computed by adding the number values for each of the responses given by the study respondents, for each of the burnout subscales. As previously stated, a high degree of burnout is reflected in low scores on personal accomplishment (PA) and high scores on the emotional exhaustion (EE) and depersonalization (DP) subscales. The study participants' burnout scores were then grouped into low, average and high categories of burnout on the three dimensions of burnout, based on the criteria set out by Maslach et al. (1996). See Table 7 for the values of the three levels of burnout for each of the three dimensions of burnout. These three levels of scores were later utilized to create categorical variables for burnout.

Table 7: Range of Experienced Burnout for Social Service Workers

MBI Subscales	Low (lower third)	Average (middle third)	High (upper third)
EE	≤ 16	17 - 27	≥ 29
DP	≤ 5	6 - 10	≥ 11
PA	≥ 37	36 - 30	≤ 29

Note:

From, Maslach Burnout Inventory Manual, 3rd Edition (p. 6), by C. Maslach, S. Jackson, & M. Leiter, (1996), California: Consultation Psychologists Press, Inc.

Table 8 demonstrates the proportion of individuals scoring low, average or high on burnout, as defined by Maslach and her colleagues. This study sample's mean score for each of the dimensions of burnout was found to be in the average ranges (EE; $M = 23.0$, $SD = 11.6$, DP; $M = 9.3$, $SD = 6.0$ and PA; $M = 33.3$, $SD = 6.5$). Overall scores on the MBI were similar to those of the comparison group of social service workers reported by Maslach and her colleagues (1986). In comparison to the group of child protection workers studied by Anderson (2000), this sample was slightly lower on the burnout scale. Anderson (2000) reported mean scores for EE, DP and PA to be 30.75, 10.12 and 34.41. Within this sample, 33.0% ($n = 35$) of respondents were classified as having high scores for EE, 34.9% ($n = 37$), had high scores for DP and, 27.6% ($n = 28$) were found to have low personal accomplishment scores (indicative of a higher degree of burnout) using the same cutoff scores as Maslach et al., 1996.

Table 8: Descriptive Profile of Study Participants' Levels of Expressed Burnout and Job Satisfaction (Percentage Distributions)

Characteristic	%	Median	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Range
Burnout: EE (score range: 9-63)					
Less than 17	33.0				
17-27	34.0				
28 or higher	33.0				
		22.0	23.0	11.6	0-53
Burnout: DP (score range: 5-35)					
Less than 6	30.2				
6-10	34.9				
11 or higher	34.9				
		8.0	9.3	6.0	0-25
Burnout: PA (score range: 8-48)					
Less than 30	27.6				
30-36	32.4				
37 or higher	40.0				
		34.0	33.3	6.5	15-45
Job Satisfaction: Single Item					
Very Satisfied	3.0				
Somewhat Satisfied	19.0				
Not Too Satisfied	52.0				
Not at All Satisfied	26.0	3.01	3.0	0.76	1 - 4
Job Satisfaction: Full Scale (score range: 7-32)					
Less than 15	16.0				
15-19	45.0				
20 or higher	39.0				
		18.09	17	4.3	5 - 24

Overall, the majority of frontline workers were moderately satisfied with their current jobs. Their responses to the question “all in all, how satisfied are you with your job?”, the single-item measure of the job satisfaction scale was measured on a four-point scale ranging from “4 = very satisfied” to “1 = not at all satisfied”, and yielded a mean of 3.01 and a standard deviation of 0.76. In terms of percentages, 22% reported being either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied”, while 26% were “not at all satisfied”. With the full job satisfaction scale where a score of 32 is the most satisfied, the mean score for this sample was 18.09, $SD = 4.3$. With both measures, it is apparent that child welfare workers are mostly neither fully satisfied or not at all satisfied. With the single-item measure of job satisfaction 71% of the participants fell within the “somewhat satisfied” and “not too satisfied” scores.

Departmental Comparisons

A preliminary overview of the department analysis outlines a difficulty from the onset pertaining to group sizes. Only six of the participants were from the Resources Department, making this group small for comparative statistics. This department is also unique from the other frontline child welfare departments in that the clients which they primarily interact with are foster parents and not at risk children and/or their families. For these reasons, this group was eliminated from departmental comparisons. Initially the analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to explore the relationship of each of the independent variables to dependent variables of burnout and job satisfaction. This test must follow the assumption that “the variances in all groups must be equal” (Norusis,

1991, p. 291). In one instance of testing between group departmental differences on key, seemingly significant, dependent measures (DP) the ANOVA homogeneity of variance assumption was violated, DP: $F(2, 103) = 6.28, p < 0.01$.

In order to address this problem the chi-square (χ^2) statistic was utilized for comparing department scores and testing this study's central comparative research questions. It is a distribution-free, non-parametric test statistic. The chi-square test does not require the usual assumptions of similar group variances (Aron & Aron, 1999). The chi-square statistic was utilized to assess for variability within the departments and this study's main dependent variables, EE, DP, PA and to two job satisfaction scores to determine whether or not there is a relationship with those dependent variables and the independent variable of department. To calculate chi-square, the five outcome variables were transformed to categorical measures using the cut off scores previously discussed for EE, DP and PA. Those scores reaching the high category for EE, DP and low category for PA were counted as positive for burnout. Those scores which fell in the mid or low ranges of EE and DP and mid or high ranges for PA were considered to not possess the trait in order to make up dichotomous variables for the outcome variables of burnout. Job Satisfaction (low scores) were categorized by grouping all but the 'not at all satisfied' categories for the single item measure and the full scale of job satisfaction was divided by grouping the scores that were less than 16 and counting those in the dissatisfied category to create the dichotomous variables for job satisfaction measures. Table 9 demonstrates each department and their scores on the three dimensions of burnout and the two job satisfaction measures. Interestingly, here it is observed that those

Table 9: Departmental Comparisons on Levels of Expressed Burnout and Job Satisfaction Statistical Significance

Prevalence of High Burnout/Low Job Satisfaction (%)				
Dependent Measures	CS	FS	Intake	$\chi^2(2)$
Emotional Exhaustion	58.3	35.4	17.2	6.91*
Depersonalization	66.7	36.9	17.2	9.43**
(Lack of) Personal Accomplishment	33.3	26.2	28.6	0.28
Lack of Job Satisfaction (1-item score)	8.3	26.7	32.1	2.51
Lack of Job Satisfaction (7-item score)	16.7	16.7	14.3	0.09

Note

* $p < 0.05$

** $p < 0.01$

in the Children Services department were over twice as likely to score higher on EE than those in the Family Service department, and more than three times as likely to score high on EE, than those study participants in the Intake department. There was also a significant relationship between the DP measure of burnout and department. The majority of the study participants in the Children Services department were emotionally exhausted ($n = 7$), and were depersonalizing ($n = 8$). The other three outcome variables of burden did not produce a significant effect to department worked. The predictor variable; department worked, was significantly related to the two most important measures of burnout. Koeske and Koeske (1989) defined EE and DP as the essence of burnout. This concept was adopted by several other researchers including Anderson

(2000) and Koeske & Kelly (1995). The strength of this relationship requires further exploration. As department was found to be not significantly related to either job satisfaction measures, no further comparison statistics were used for this outcome variable.

As previous analysis indicated, the independent variable, department, had a significant relationship with two of the dependent variables, EE and DP. Now, the preponderance of the predictor, department, to the two outcome measures EE and DP must be measured in order to determine the size and validity of that relationship, (Cooper, 1998). The significance level of EE and DP to department already obtained by the chi-square test earlier, provides no explanation on whether the relationship between the variables is large or small, or whether it is of any consequence (Cooper, 1998).

There are several different metrics for describing the strength of a relationship. The prevalence ratio statistic was calculated to determine the effect sizes of EE and DP as they pertain to each of the departments. The choice to utilize the prevalence ratio was driven by this study's sample size and the desire to assure the effect size was not over estimated and that a more accurate estimate of prevalence would be obtained. Results are found in Table 10. Again, the significance was observed with the Children Service Department .

Given the significance of the independent variable, department on the two main burnout measures (EE and DP), it then became important to evaluate the significance of the other independent variables which were found to be statistically significant in relationship to department. In order to begin to answer the question of what factors

Table 10: Specific Departmental Comparisons on levels of Expressed Burnout
Assessment of Practical Significance

Dependent Measures	<u>Specific Departmental Comparisons (Prevalence Ratio)</u>		
	CS/Intake	FS/Intake	CS/FS
Emotional Exhaustion	3.39**	2.06***	1.65
Depersonalization	3.88**	2.15***	1.81***

Note

*** $p < 0.10$

** $p < 0.01$

influence the outcome of EE and DP, all the other independent variables related to demographic and work history were tested for their significance in relationship to department. Table 11, outlines some of the key independent variables and their relationship to department. The only independent variables which were significantly associated with department were gender, years of child welfare experience, BSW degree and afterhours program work. The Children Services department had significantly less females, less workers with a BSW degree and less workers in the afterhours program than the Intake and Family Services departments. Interestingly, none of these variables were significantly associated with any of the dependent variables, including the measures of burnout, EE and DP, so by definition, they can not confound the observed department-burnout relationships. That is, whatever effects department itself has on burnout, it seems to be independent of these other factors.

Table 11: Departmental Comparisons on Worker Characteristics

Worker Attributes	Prevalence by Department (%)			
	CS	FS	Intake	$\chi^2(2)$
Female	58.3 ^a	89.1 ^b	89.7 ^b	8.30*
7 + years of Child Welfare Exp.	58.3 ^a	28.1 ^b	51.7 ^a	7.07*
B.S.W. degree	25.0 ^a	62.5 ^b	62.1 ^b	24.56***
Work Afterhours	8.3 ^a	15.4 ^a	37.9 ^a	7.47*

Note: Group percentages with different superscripts were significantly different from each other ($p < 0.05$, Ryan's procedure).

*** $p < 0.1$

* $p < 0.05$

Regression analysis

Because this study is limited in its power to build complex mathematical models (e.g. at least one of the key study groups is quite small; 12 Children Services department participants) and because of the previously noted distribution problems of its key continuous variables (EE and DP), binary or logistic regression models were explored with an eye toward simplicity. A department dummy variable was force entered first into separate models on the binary criterion variables of EE and DP (0, 1; relating high versus low scores). Then the other variables which resulted in a significant difference between departments (gender, years of experience, BSW degree and afterhours work) displayed in

Table 9 were forced entered together (p to enter each model of .10). For emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, department itself respectively accounted for only 6.4% and 7.6% of their variability. All of the other factors combined only added a respective, 8.1% and 6.6% to each models predictive power (R^2 total = 12.4% and 14.2% on EE and DP respectively) were forced entered together (p to enter each model of .10). For emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, department itself respectively accounted for only 6.4% and 7.6% of their variability. All of the other factors combined only added a respective, 8.1% and 6.6% to each models predictive power.

Participation

The current study demonstrated a difference in EE and DP among the frontline departments, however this finding must endure one last analysis. The effects of participation bias may be of importance. Table 12 provides information regarding participation rates by departments. The departments differed significantly; $\chi^2 (2, 157) = 3.09, ns$. It is not possible therefore that response bias could significantly confound this study's central department-burnout (EE and DP) findings. To be considered is the small sample size ($n = 12$) for the Children Services department.

Table 12: Participation Rates Per Department

	Department			
	CS	FS	Intake	Total
Did Participate	12	65	29	106
Did Not Participate	10	32	9	51
Total	22	97	38	157
%	54.5	67.0	76.3	

Qualitative Data

The purpose of the qualitative questions was to add further meaning to the information provided by the quantitative data. There were a total of nine open ended questions asked of the participants at the end of the survey package. The data received from the participants was transcribed word per word into a word processing document. These transcripts were then analyzed by the researcher as described in the data analysis section of this document.

Intercoder and intracoder reliability techniques were implemented in order to assure consistency. Intercoder reliability refers to consistency among different coders. For this purpose, an external auditor reviewed the data. There was a reported 80% congruence with each question when looking at patterns, predominant themes and open

coding within the data. The external auditor was both familiar with the field of child protection and conversant with qualitative research design and analysis. Intracoder reliability refers to consistency within a single coder. With this in mind, the researcher went over the data several times, each time re-assessing the meanings and codes provided, until major themes emerged. Table 13 provides an overview of the themes and subcategories which emerged from the qualitative questions and used as independent variables when departmental comparisons were preformed.

Table 13: Qualitative Themes and Subcategories

Area of Focus	Themes
Stress/Burnout	Overloading / Job Characteristics
	Workload
	Competing Demands
	Unpredictability
	Time Management
	Organizational Attributes
	Agency Change
	Lack of Communication
	Lack of Knowledge / Training
	Management/Supervision Issues
	Client Attributes
	External Relationships
	Lack of Resources
	Legal System
	Media Coverage
	Negative Perceptions in community
Worker Attributes	

Table 13 Continued

Area of Focus	Themes
Strategies suggested by Workers to Manage stress/Burnout	Workload and Job Characteristics
	Direct Work Issues
	Training
	Recording/Paperwork
	Support Service
	Support Factors
	Emotional/Personal
	Communication
	Agency/Team Events & Activities
	Organizational Attributes
	External Relations
	Work Environment
	Management Style
	Personal Safety
	Benefits
Job Satisfaction	Job Characteristics
	Challenge of the work
	Autonomy
	Variety of Tasks
	Field of Child Protection /Legal
	Learning and Developing of skills
	Support Factors
	Team Work
	Co-workers
	Community Collaborations
	Supervisors
	Work with Clients
	Benefits
Job Dissatisfaction Factors	Job Characteristics
	Workload
	Challenge
	Field of Child Welfare
	Organizational Attributes
	Benefits
	Work Environment
	Agency Change

Table 13 Continued

Area of Focus	Themes
Job Dissatisfaction Factors	Bureaucracy
	Leadership
	Supervision
	Community Factors
	Lack of Resources
	Negative Perceptions
	Client Attributes
	Client Characteristics
	Minimal Observable Change
	Worker Attributes
	Value Conflicts
	Reduced Sense of Accomplishment
	Feelings of Stress
	Responsibility/Liability
Strategies Used by workers	Support
	Family
	Friends
	Supervisors
	Peers
	Physical Means
	Personal Means
Attitudes About Technology	Work/Life Balance
	Effective
	Not Effective
	Too many changes / Adaptation Required

Stress and Burnout

What are the major sources of stress for frontline child protection workers? From the 112 surveys collected there were 110 responses. It was clear in reviewing these responses that child protection workers are not only faced with a high volume of stressors, these stressors are coming from multiple sources. Further analysis of the

responses given in the area of sources of stress, allowed for five major themes to emerge, they were as follows; overloading of job responsibilities, organizational attributes, client and worker attributes.

The most prominent theme observed has been labeled, “Overloading” by this writer. Eighty-five of the 110 responses received (77.3%) for this question referenced the issues of volume in terms of work duties and responsibilities, as well as competing demands. All of these issues are related to job characteristics. This phenomenon of competing demands and overload of job duties could be described as the pressure and anxiety expressed by workers due to the diversity in workload demands, the unpredictable work hours necessary to complete the job, the constant need to prioritize, time manage and find the balance necessary to be efficient in their roles. This feeling of being overloaded was described by one participant as, “stress com[ing] from workload, time management, and organization. There is always lots to do, with not enough time” (Subject 1). Another re-occurring issue under the theme of overload, was the paperwork. One participant stated that; “high caseloads and high paperwork loads can be quite stressful” (Subject 15), while another said, “time frames for completion of recordings” (Subject 20) was stressful. These last comments highlight yet another taxing issue in this theme of overloading; that of time. One participant explained that “the amount of paperwork required takes away from the face-to-face contact with clients” (Subject 22), while another response stated that there are “not enough hours in the day sometimes” (Subject 26). To add to their daily pressures child protection workers feel they are dealing with “the uncertainty on a day to day basis [and] it is often uncertain what will

occur on a [given] day” (Subject 7). Workers are impacted by “the constant overtime and never knowing when you will be home” (Subject 61). Other issues related to the theme of overloading were “the draining effects of [apprehensions]” (Subject 71) and “legal crap” (Subject 90). In regards to the legal aspect of the work, one participant indicated that he or she was “wasting my time sitting in court for hours to be in for 2 minutes” (Subject 31). It is evident that the pressing duties, responsibilities and often crisis orientated aspects of this work takes its toll on the individuals who perform this job.

The second important stressor mentioned could be categorized as, organizational attributes. From the 110 responses, 50 (or 45.5%) mentioned aspects related to the theme of organizational attributes, including agency change, lack of communication, inter-departmental issues, unclear expectation and supervisory issues. One participant stated, that there is a “lack of cooperation/consideration from other departments within the agency” (Subject 5) as well as “a lack of support from co-workers” (Subject 19). Furthermore, it was expressed that there is a “lack of availability of supervisors” (Subject 11), “difficulty in getting consistent supervision” (Subject 12) and “unrealistic expectations” (Subject 25). Other stressors in this area included, “changing technology with not enough training”. And “having both the roles of a family service worker and children’s worker” (Subject 105) or “being put or bumped into this position due to reorganization of agency” (Subject 26) and having “greater administrative duties” (Subject 106), all in reference to the recent restructuring which the agency experienced in January, 2004. In relation to the organizational structure, there were comments about the lack of internal resources, one participant stated that “there are few foster homes” (Subject 35)

for the children coming into care. Then there were the physical aspects of the organization, the new building which houses the employees of WECAS was seen a source of stress by some of the respondents, one individual wrote that it was “too noisy” (Subject 48) and caused him or her to feel disrupted. In their research Jayaratne & Chess (1984) surmised that organizational factors play a significant role in feelings of job satisfaction and burnout.

The subject of dealing with certain clients was referenced by workers as a source of stress, 43 (or 39.1%) of the respondents listed this as a source of stress in their position. One respondent explained this by saying that, “dealing with angry clients can be stressful. We are often the ones that they blame”(Subject 91). Yet another responded further explained how this strain impacted him or her by describing the “client’s inability or lack of motivation to change” (Subject 2). To add to this subject, many workers described their frustration in dealing with “volatile” (Subject 51), “chronic” (Subject 11), “resistant” (Subject 52) or “threatening” (Subject 34) clients, “who can’t be self reliant to some degree” and, “never knowing what you are walking into when entering a client’s home” (Subject 42).

The fourth theme observed was that of external relationships. These stressors were identified as coming from the community and resounded in 39 (or 35.5%) of the responses. They included such things as lack of services for children, the legal system, media coverage, negative perceptions in the community, and the lack of understanding of the role of a child protection worker in the community. Several comments were made around attending court and meeting with lawyers. One participant explained that the

“court system is extremely back-logged and judges are disrespectful and condescending” (Subject 111). One participant explained that “one of the major stresses for me is dealing with the negative and often erroneous belief in the community about CAS in general” (Subject 3). Another respondent illustrates the pressures coming from the outside by saying, “lack of communication and resources with community partners (and) lack of understanding by community partners with respect to child protection work” (Subject 37) increases his or her stress. There is an expectation from the community that child protection practitioners can solve complex and serious societal problems with insufficient resources (Anderson, 1996). Furthermore, many participants discussed the effects of the media coverage WECAS received, one participant wrote, “the media has given WECAS workers a bad rap and clients have become more untrusting and aggressive with us because of this” (Subject 10). This outside stressor is not uncommon in the literature, Anderson (1996) reported that in many communities, public welfare workers are stigmatized. Lastly, in relation to outside pressures, was those imposed by the ministry including guidelines and standards and “recent concern over audits” (Subject 50).

Finally, the issue of impact of the job expectations on the individual worker’s internal resources (referred to as the variable; worker attributes) was identified by 38 (or 34.6%) of the respondents as a source of stress. This included, lack of satisfaction with aspects of the job, negative impact on home life, and sense of personal responsibility. This phenomena was illustrated by one respondent as, “not knowing exactly what to do” (Subject 39). The “overall responsibility [a] worker has for children’s safety” in carrying

out a mandate to protect children was certainly a burden expressed by many, this was described by some workers as “liability” (Subject 8). One respondent wrote that, “being responsible for young children [and] making sure that you have taken all actions necessary to insure the safety of children and families” (Subject 33) was a major source of stress. The subject of “worrying” (Subject 97) was a predominant one, worrying about doing the proper documentation, making the proper decisions, forgetting things and “being a new worker and not sure if I am doing everything I am supposed to be doing”. One respondent illustrated his or her personal conflict by saying that what he or she found stressful was “the decisions I must make in consultation with my supervisor which can have life long implications for the families I serve” (Subject 76).

What do the Workers of Each Department Identify as Being Major Causes of Burnout ?

This research question of what workers find stressful about their jobs was analyzed by department using a computer statistical program in order to obtain information which would be more relevant to this document’s central question, and to answer this study’s third research question. The five major themes were compared with the three departments using frequencies and crosstabs. First, it would be significant to mention that there was no difference between how much the study participants had to say and departments.

Crosstabulations were conducted to display the number of cases in each category. Therefore, the number of study participants who had responses which reflected any of the five major themes for each department were analyzed. There was a difference between

the three departments and the responses related to organization attributes. Intake workers mentioned organizational attributes in 62.1% of their responses, compared to Family Services who identified it in 36.9% of their answers and Children Services in only 25% of their responses. See Table 14 for details. Given this difference, the subcategories of the organization attributes were analyzed in order to determine with more preciseness the nature of the differences between departments. When all organizational attributes were reviewed it was noted that significant differences were present with the subcategories of agency change, supervision/management and lack of knowledge or training. The differences with the subcategory agency change may be explained by the fact that the time of the study coincided with the implementation of a new computer system for the Intake and Family Services Departments. These two departments were directly impacted by the need to learn and adjust to the new computer system in August and September, 2004. Table 14 illustrates a significant difference with the supervision and management issues between departments, none of the Children Services participants made reference to this issue. Intake workers were more than twice as likely to feel supervision and management factors cause them stress. Also, the area of knowledge or required training should be noted as it did indicate a possible significant difference between departments. None of the Intake workers in the study noted lack of knowledge or training as a stressor. This may be explained by the significant differences found in years of experience as it pertained to Intake.

Table 14: Descriptive Profile of Study Participants; Identified Stress Issues and Department

Characteristic	Prevalence (%)			χ^2
	C. S.	F. S.	Int.	
Organizational Attributes:	25.0 ^a	36.9 ^a	62.1 ^b	6.88*
Management and Supervision issues	0.0 ^a	20.0 ^b	55.2 ^c	17.57*
Agency Change	0.0 ^a	6.2 ^a	60.0 ^b	6.37*
Lack of Training / Knowledge	8.3 ^a	15.4 ^a	0.0 ^b	5.16***

Note: Group percentages with different superscripts were significantly different from each other ($p < 0.05$, Ryan's procedure)

*** approached statistical significance at $p < 0.1$

* $p < 0.05$

As the organizational attributes proved to have significant differences between the departments, it was further analyzed for any potential relationship with the outcome variables which were found to have significance to department, EE and DP.

Organizational attributes were found to be related to high EE levels, supporting the findings of Jayaratne et al. (1991) that organizational factors were strongly associated with job satisfaction and burnout, their study used the MBI and Quinn's single-item job satisfaction measure. This finding is important as EE was also significantly related to department. Given the significance of EE to the theme of organizational attributes, EE was analyzed against the other five major themes of what frontline workers identified as

stressful. The variable; worker attributes, as described by the impact of job expectations on the individual worker's internal resources was found to have a relationship to EE. That is, 26.1% of those who ranked high with EE made no mention of personal or internal issues/factors as it related to their stress on the job, in relation to 45.9% of those who ranked high in EE and did identify issues related to the job expectations' impact on their individual resources (worker attributes) in regards to their feelings of stress on the job.

Strategies Implemented to Address Stress/Burnout and Increase Job Satisfaction

The second and third questions of the survey were analyzed together, they asked: what has the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society done to address child protection worker stress and, how effective have these efforts been? Frontline child protection workers at WECAS felt that the management of the agency had attempted to address three major areas, including job characteristics, support factors and organizational attributes. The concept "attempted to address" is meaningful as it relates to the third question of the survey which asked how effective were those efforts. These responses ranged from effective, to somewhat or fairly effective and not effective. From the 112 participants 111 answered question two and 101 responded to question three.

The highest given response regarding what WECAS has done to address worker stress was directly related to job characteristics. Sixty-seven participants indicated that the management at WECAS had focused on job duties and workload issues to reduce stress. Many respondents referred to the agency's restructuring, "WECAS decided to change the way service is delivered by implementing a more generic approach" (subject

3). Some participants acknowledge that an effort was made to reduce caseloads, “capped caseloads” (subject 49) referring to the union-management contract which was negotiated in 2004 and included a statement which represented a commitment from management not to exceed a certain number of cases for each department. Many participants acknowledged the fact that the agency had “hir[ed] more workers” (subject 91) thus, allowing their case load size to remain lower. The agency’s attempt at addressing workload and case load size was noted by more than half of the sample. From those 67 responses referencing the theme of job characteristics, 17 of them also included negative or discretionary disclaimers such as “lowering the caseload numbers has been somewhat effective”(subject 81), “attempts have been made to address workload but they do not appear affective ”(subject 43), or “periodic case load decrease” (subject 101), indicating that although the agency did something about caseloads it was either not seen as helpful or not seen as completely successful.

Many of the respondents identified support factors, including team work, debriefing, work coverage arrangements, staff meetings and staff activities. Several respondents identified supervisors and case supervision as a form of support and strategy to reduce stress. Subject 51 wrote that the agency “provided professional and supportive supervision to assist in dealing with hostile and uncooperative clients”. There was mention of specific time put aside specifically for team building, “WECAS gives us team days” (subject 1). Fourteen subjects commented on both good supervisory/management support and the encouragement of team work and support. To further illustrate the issue of support, several study participants commented on supervisors, some “stress the

importance of using your team to debrief after a stressful visit” (subject 4), some, “supervisors are good to talk to” (subject 46) and there is an, “open-door policy [where you can] feel free to talk to a supervisor about concerns” (subject 49). There were some participants who were skeptical of the quantity of support offered by managers, “although they are understanding [they are] not available when needed at times due to agency being understaffed in this area” (subject 14). The need for child protection workers to have work support is well documented in the literature and has been found to have a direct link to job satisfaction (Rooney & Leslie, 2004).

This study found that many workers identified such issues as training, scheduled recording time for workers to complete paper work without the burden of responding to daily case related issues, technology, benefits and personal safety. These references were all labeled under the theme of organizational attributes for the purpose of analyzing this question. One subject mentioned that “they have a workload committee” (subject 4) referring to the union-management group which meets to discuss and address workload complaints and problems on a regular basis. Another point made was that “WECAS gives us protected recording days to help us complete needed paperwork” (subject 1). To further explain this concept, “a plan was devised, whereas workers are allotted a week to conduct required recording/paperwork while not encumbered with new referrals” (subject 52) referring to the system implemented in the Intake Department (but also used in the Family Services and Children Services departments) to assist workers to be able to complete their recordings in a timely manner and not worry about everyday work. The new computer program was noted as an effort made by the organization to assist workers,

“the implementation of our new computer system ‘Matrix’ [was] designed to help lower workload” (subject 85). The available flexibility in the work day was described as a benefit provided by the agency, this is demonstrated with one respondent who said; “provided flexible schedules which helps a lot with working parents and they are understanding of family needs” (subject 87), and yet another who said, “changed working hours” (subject 92) referring to another negotiated item in the 2004 union contract where workers were awarded a shortened work day. The final factor noted within this theme of organizational attributes for this question, was around benefits. Some of the noted responses included the availability of massage therapy, salary, vacation and the Employee Assistance Plan (EAP). “They brought in the opportunity to schedule massage appointments at work (subject 82) and “they have EAP offered, yoga and massage therapy at the office” (subject 102). Also, the agency was recognized for “set(ting)-up professional debriefing after crisis” (subject 11), referring to the individual or small group interventions organized after specific serious incidents involving work. There were some respondents who appreciated that they are “provided with a lot of vacation time” (subject 4) and that “the pay is not bad either” (subject 23).

Several of the participants indicated some scepticism when making reference to what WECAS has done to address stress, however they did acknowledge that some efforts had been made by the organization. There were six respondents, however, who could not identify any efforts made by the organization. Those negative responses deserve some attention at this point as they can further assist in assessing how workers perceive the agency’s efforts, as well as what workers may require to further feel

supported in their jobs. Subject 61 wrote, "they have done absolutely nothing, they have increased stress by reorganizing without the input of staff [and] changing the computer system". Similarly, subject 109's complete answer to this question was, "not much".

Some study participants acknowledged that certain identified problems are beyond the scope of the organization, "I believe many of the issues that contribute to my stress can only be resolved at a Ministry level (i.e; recording packages)" (subject 48), referring to the standardized recording format (paperwork) imposed at the Ministry level which is often referred to as cumbersome and repetitive by child welfare workers. One participant felt that, "the very nature of the work does not always allow for success" (subject 20) indicating that any efforts made to reduce stress could not be successful in the working environment of child welfare.

Twenty-six of the respondents felt the efforts made by the agency to reduce stress were successful, like subject 73, "good enough for me" and subject 100, "these efforts have been very effective". In particular people mentioned, management support, flexible work schedule and lowered caseloads as being effective ways of addressing stress. One participant wrote, "I appreciate the flexibility in the job in regards to personal time for overtime". The notion of fewer cases also appealed to many of the respondents, one stated "in the last year, my caseload has gone down by approximately 10 cases". Forty-five study participants thought the efforts made by the agency to reduce stress were somewhat effective, or were noncommittal in their evaluation of the agency's efforts, like this participant who wrote, "many things have remained unchanged" (subject 18). These responses reflected an understanding of the efforts made by the agency, however those

efforts were noted as being insufficient. One participant illustrated this notion by writing, “somewhat, as case numbers are decreasing however, personally I prefer working with the families rather than the kids in care”, again referring to the change in job duties in the Family Services department after the agency’s restructuring, in January 2004. Twenty-eight participants (more than those who were completely satisfied) simply felt the efforts made were ineffective. Participants were able to identify efforts made by the agency for the most part, however did not see them as helpful. In regards to the restructuring and the lowered caseloads, one participant wrote that, “decreased caseloads has been replaced by other demands such as access issues, paperwork, responsibilities etc.” and another wrote that the efforts were “not particularly effective, any efforts have only increased the stress level, the hostility between staff and lowered morale of the entire agency and increased the workload of social workers who are already burnt out and overwhelmed”.

There are varying degrees when it comes to how successful frontline staff feel efforts made to ease the burdens of the work have been. One participant writes, “I have always felt the support I needed, have always been able to debrief. The protected recording days are very useful and work to eliminate a great deal of my stress. I feel the training I have been provided make me feel more competent in my work. My flexible schedule allows me to keep a really good balance between my work, life and my home life. This in turn makes me very happy. I also think this is the main factor which keeps me feeling positive about my job for the most part. I have never used EAP but am glad to know it is there” (subject 34, question 3). Alternatively, subject 43, question 3 stated, “I don’t feel they’re effective long-term - WECAS appears to respond reactively rather than

proactively” (subject 43). This high degree of variance in how frontline workers feel their stress is being managed by the organization will be further explored in the discussion section of this document.

What are the Proposed Solutions to Address Burnout and Increase Job Satisfaction?

What did the participants think WECAS should do to address stress/burnout with child protection workers? The analysis indicated that the main themes identified for this question were identical to those found with the question, “what has the WECAS done to address child protection worker stress?”. The proposed solutions from the participants to reducing stress, thus addressing potential burnout, focused on job characteristics, organizational attributes and support. Even the order of frequency was paralleled, with job characteristics having the most mention among the responses. A total of 109 participants answered this question.

The job characteristics theme can be best described by four subcategories; direct work issues, training, recording days/paperwork and added support services. With this theme there were again several references to “more workers” (subject 17), “the need to continue to lower caseload numbers “ (subject 81), the need to “hire more workers” (subject 43) and “making sure the departments are kept at full strengths” (subject 52). Again, with respect to the agency’s reorganization, there were pleas to “removing [the] generic model” and “go[ing] back to specialized services” (subject 56) referring to the decision to make the Family Services and Resources departments more generic. There were remarks around the issues of programming and training. One participant indicated

that the agency should “provide resources - i.e. Parenting groups at the agency and anger management classes” (subject 68), to the clients instead of depending on other community agencies to provide those services. Some workers identified that they wanted “more education” (subject 66) and “more effective training and seminars” (subject 67) and specifically “provide training on the subject of stress” (subject 71). The need for added assistance was referenced both in terms of administrative assistance and direct assistance in working with families and children. “More information technology employees are needed to assist workers with technological changes” (subject 90) and, “bring back protection support to assist with high risk files” (subject 2) (these positions were included in the Family Services and Intake departments prior to restructuring, their duties included direct work with the families and children involved with the agency). It is obvious that workers are seeking ways in which their work could be simplified, supported and minimized. Meeting those expectations would be a challenging task for any government funded agency.

Organizational attributes were described by this sample with several subcategories emerging including; external relationships, work environment, management style, and personal safety. External relationships refers to the agency’s association with other community service providers as well as with the Ministry which governs the agency (Ministry of Community and Children Services). Many participants commented about the added agency audits and inspections conducted by the Ministry. This recent circumstance of extra scrutiny from the Ministry for this agency was well documented in the city newspaper. One participant suggested the agency should “talk seriously with the

Ministry and permit staff to talk candidly about concerns... and work on decreasing amount of paper work by working with the Ministry” (subject 3, question 4). In addition, study participants had comments regarding the management style, “have a more democratic chain of command from director to managers to workers” (subject 65) as well, they referenced the need for consistency with management direction. This last point can best be described by subject 39, “consistency is really important. You should be able to approach any supervisor and get the same answer”. Although the agency is housed in a new building with many amenities, some participants felt that the facility was noisy and lacked privacy, they wanted “offices [or] better pods” (subject 61), referring to their open concept work areas. This lack of adequate work space for child protection workers is often cited in the literature (Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991).

Once again, the concept of support was a significant one. This was discussed by the study participants in terms of; emotional and personal support from co-workers and supervisors, communication and planned agency or team events and activities. Workers appear to rely heavily on supervisory support, this theme was evident in most of the questions asked. Workers called for more meaningful and frequent contact with their immediate supervisors. One participant explained this by saying; “supervisors and management can be more understanding to individual workers” (subject 15), while another participant indicated that “more supervisors [are required] thus, [being] able to provide closer one on one time” (subject 19) or “increased availability of supervisors to assist workers in strategizing and coping with work related stress” (subject 48), and “ensure the supervisors support their workers in a non-threatening manner” (subject 51).

Certainly it has been well documented that the need for supervision in this field is of paramount importance, both as it relates to stress/burnout and job satisfaction (Maslach et al., 2001; Rooney & Leslie, 2004). The issue of communication was noted as a problem between the frontline departments of the agency, Subject 5 felt that the agency should “increase education between departments about each[other]’s responsibilities [and] have focus groups between departments to outline protocol [which is] employee driven”. Workers felt there was a lack of support or respect for one another as it pertained to their different roles and responsibilities which fostered an atmosphere for finger pointing and blaming instead of working together in the most efficient manner possible.

Finally, in terms of agency activities and planned events, some suggestions were as simple as “team days” (subject 67) for individual agency teams. Other suggestions included; that the agency “should plan activities for staff that will encourage team work, increase morale and provide stress relief” (subject 61). While some participants’ strategies were more emotion-focused, like subject 7 who felt the agency could “provide ongoing support groups” and subject 60 who felt that “WECAS should have a crisis response team in place to help workers deal with traumatic [and] stressful situations”.

Work rewards or benefits was a less prevalent theme, with about 16% of the responses identifying this issue. This element was counted when the responses included comments regarding massage and reflexology services, better pay, or payment for overtime, more vacation, “allow[ing] mental health days” (subject 74) and adjusting the work week hours (referred to as flex time by the participants) such as “flex[ing] every third Friday” (subject 100). It should be noted that the theme of overtime has been a

prevalent one throughout the entire questionnaire. Subject 12 feels that “overtime should be paid, as workers cannot take the time to flex overtime due to [a crisis, abuse or neglect referral] an immediate response [and overtime] should be automatically paid”. There were other miscellaneous suggestions such as; “free golf passes” (subject 73), “a day at the spa every four months” (subject 105) and “a four day work week” (subject 10).

In summary, “the challenge for child protection administrators is to structure a work environment that focuses on team-building competency training, healthy collaboration with other community agencies ... and education of the community at large about the work” (Anderson, 2000, p.846). The responses to this question mirrored those of what the agency has already done or attempted to do to address stress in many ways, however, few participants were completely satisfied with the agency’s efforts at reducing stress. The quandary must lie not with the strategies used, but with the deficiency of those strategies in satisfying the workers needs to further minimize burnout and improve job satisfaction. This will be further explored in the discussion and implications for practice sections of this document.

Factors for Job Satisfaction

What is it that frontline workers like about their job and what are the differences between departments? This question offered 111 responses with four major themes, many of which are familiar to this document, starting with job characteristics, support issues, client attributes and benefits. Each of the main themes will be further explored in terms of the frequency, the subcategories they hold and the differences between

departments.

Job characteristics was the prevailing theme among frontline workers when it came to why they liked their work. This included subcategories of challenge, autonomy, learning aspects, variety of the tasks, and the field of child welfare (mandated legal aspects and protecting children). Workers expressed these thoughts with such comments as, “no two days are the same” (subject 1), they liked “being challenged on a daily basis” (subject 46), and “the fast pace” (subject 20) referring to the variety and challenge aspects of the work. Many enjoyed “deal[ing] with crisis situations” (subject 82). Some referred to the protection work, or the legislated aspect of the work, by stating that they were attracted to “ensuring that kids are well cared for” (subject 23), “like[d] the field of child protection” (subject 29) and “like[d] the fact that children are being protected” (subject 32). Others made specific reference to “the court process” (subject 71). Frontline child protection was seen by many of these practitioners as a “very worthwhile and rewarding career” (subject 54).

Issues of support was another overwhelmingly popular aspect of the job noted. This included mentions of team work, the staff, community collaborations and supervisors. Team work is a re-occurring theme, thus an important element as it pertains to child protection work, as one subject (1) reported “I like working as a team and getting ideas from my colleagues”. Subject 48, noted that he/she “love[s] the sense of togetherness and the caring of fellow workers and supervisors” and there is “great support from all supervisors and very professional colleagues” (subject 55). There were favorable remarks made regarding senior management as well, “I find working with a director like

J. makes this job a little more bearable, I find she is down to earth and approachable which I like in a director" (subject 47). Also, some participants reported on the support from the community in addressing the needs of their clients, such as subject 31 who indicated that he/she liked "networking with other community agencies".

The work done with clients was mentioned by the sample and included working with children, families and foster parents as well as having a sense of accomplishment and making an impact, such as subject 1 who indicated that he/she "like[s] working with clients, seeing them make changes [and] enjoy[s] working with the children ... [and] feeling that [he/she] is making a difference", also there is "the fact that I have been afforded the opportunity to effect meaningful change in families and children" (subject 40) and, subject 56 who "enjoys being a catalyst to helping [clients] make positive changes in their lives". Several participants made comments indicating their penchant for the direct contact they have with their clients.

Direct benefits (amount of sick days allowed, salary, vacation and physical work environment) were reported by the study participants as a positive element. Several respondents made reference to the flexibility allowed in the work, "I like the independence of setting up my day and work" (subject 11). As well, the flexibility of the structure of the regular work week [Monday to Friday] and work hours was deemed favorable by the participants, "weekends off" (subject 14) and, "time off for doctor's appointments, sick children, sick days" (subject 31). Some participants made mention of the "new building" (subject 83) and the benefits of the staff room and having the entire staff housed in one building.

The above noted major themes were calculated and analyzed by department using chi-square. There were no differences between departments and the major themes coded. The subcategories of the major themes noted from the responses to this question were then analyzed by department, see Table 15. There was a difference noted between the departments and one of the job characteristics; the one referred to as, the field of child protection. The field of child protection was the term used to label those responses that included reference to protecting children, working within a mandate, assessing risk to a child or legal work. More Family Services participants listed job elements relayed to the subcategory of, the field of child protection than workers in other departments. Table 15 demonstrated that significant results were approached with the following subcategories: job characteristics, challenge, and community collaboration.

The major themes around what frontline child protection workers like about their job was compared with the two measures of burnout which were previously found to be related to department; EE and DP. This analysis found that only the subcategory of job characteristics was related to both EE and DP. In both instances those who ranked high in the EE and DP measures of burnout did not mention the element described as job characteristics. The findings for EE and job characteristics were, $\chi^2 (1, N = 112) = 5.51$, $p < 0.05$ and with DP and job characteristics, $\chi^2 (1, N = 112) = 4.94$, $p < 0.05$. The element of physical work environment approached statistical significance as it related to the measure of EE ($\chi^2 (1, N = 112) = 3.31$, $p < 0.1$) with those reporting the element of physical work environment ranking in the high level of EE. These findings will be further explored within the discussion section of this document.

Table 15: Departmental Comparisons on Job Satisfaction Factors

Characteristic	Prevalence (%)			χ^2
	C. S.	F.S.	Int.	
Job Characteristics:				
Challenge	0.0 ^a	27.7 ^b	34.5 ^b	5.33***
Field of Child Protection	0.0 ^a	15.4 ^b	0.0 ^a	6.45*
Support Factor:				
Community Collaterals	33.3 ^a	15.4 ^b	3.4 ^c	6.45*

Note: Group percentages with different superscripts were significantly different from each other ($p < 0.05$, Ryan's procedure).

*** approached statistical significance at $p < 0.1$

* $p < 0.05$

Analysis of factors that caused job dissatisfaction

This section will examine those issues that the frontline child protection workers at WECAS identified as contributing to their dissatisfaction with the work. Study participants were asked; "What don't you like about your job?". Again, the similar themes emerged from the analysis of this question. This question revealed five major themes which were identified by the participants' responses: job characteristics, organizational attributes, community relations, client and worker attributes. This question was also further analyzed with a computer statistical program in order to gain

more in depth information regarding any possible departmental differences.

Dissatisfaction with the work was reflected in job characteristics in relation to caseloads, paperwork, court work, and time. "You have to be prepared for the unexpected" says subject 112. "Time constraints given are not always realistic or practical" (subject 110) and "ministry standards" (subject 99) are difficult to meet according to many, referring to the standards in documentation and time lines. The theme of time was also referred to as, "the amount of overtime required to do a thorough job" (subject 75), the dislike for "late appointments" (subject 66), "not being able to leave at the end of the day" (subject 64) and "not being able to plan personal activities without worry of needing to change plans" (subject 63). There are a "high level of non-social work tasks" (subject 107) which frustrates the workers. Paperwork was mentioned in terms of its "redundancy" (subject 84), "too much" (subject 83), "ongoing deadlines of the paperwork" (subject 69), and "the amount of paperwork which interferes with the amount of time I have for clients" (subject 61). Here many of the issues mirrored the concept of work overload reviewed when the sample was asked what caused them stress with their work.

Organizational attributes which were unfavorable for workers emerged and were subcategorized as: financial reward, work environment, agency change, restructuring, "learning new technology" (subject 103), bureaucracy, leadership and supervision. There were some issues with the physical building in that some workers "don't like the setup of pods [open concept work space], no privacy" (subject 49). As it pertains to the organization, workers expressed dissatisfaction with the line of communication such as

subject 77, who said “I do not enjoy feeling that staff input is not taken seriously” and the “lack of communication between management and frontline workers” (subject 83) and “senior management appears very removed from what workers do each day” (subject 81). There was mention of the changes that had occurred “too much change in how we do our job from one day to next” (subject 95), “I do not like the role of children service worker, that was forced [as a result of the restructuring] on us Family Service Workers” (subject 53) and the difficulties in learning a new computer system was referenced, “Matrix computer program” (subject 20). The issue of support was expressed in several different ways, including not “feeling supported by management” (subject 109) and “inability to access supervisors” (subject 13). This study participant also commented on the peripheral supports required to ease their work burden and the frustration that there is, “no secretary [and his or her] time [is] being wasted on trivial things [like] photocopying, faxing, filing, [and] data entry” (subject 58).

The theme of community relationships appeared with the subcategories of lack of community resources and negative (media and community) perceptions. There is a “lack of respect in the court system for workers [and a] lack of consistency among judges in terms of expectations of workers” (subject 95). Community perception and understanding of the work of child protection was referred to often, with one individual stating that he/she “does not like the negative stigma attached to working at CAS or the public’s image of the agency” (subject 40). Also, some participants expressed their concern with the “lack of community services” (subject 37), and the difficulty this caused in serving their clients.

The theme of client attributes was apparent within this sample's responses to what they did not like about their work. This theme emerged in such issues as working with clients, certain client characteristics and minimal observable change with clients. "You always have to be on your guard when dealing with hostile clients" (subject 112), and "adolescents who have no respect and are draining to work with and don't appreciate things" (subject 80) causes dissatisfaction. The concept of observing minimal change was reported as, "draining clients who repeat the same cycles over and over again" (subject 76) and it is frustrating to constantly "observe the lack of success with clients" (subject 106). Another difficult issue to face is that often "clients blame everyone else for their actions" (subject 76). Equally as difficult when it pertains to the work with clients was that "the relationship we have with clients can be negative and is not always conducive to helping" (subject 55), which often resulted in "dealing with volatile and angry clients" (subject 22), thus causing concern for workers' personal safety in dealing with the clients they are trying to help.

Worker attributes which materialized included statements which indicated value conflicts, reduced sense of accomplishment, feelings of stress, overwhelming sense of responsibility and "liability" (subject 101). "Watching children develop behaviours and emotional issues because of inadequate parenting [and] not being able to respond until after the damage is done" (subject 74) was how one subject expressed his/her reduced sense of accomplishment. "The stress is constant", said subject 65 and, the "balancing act of [the] protection role versus [the] support and advocacy role" (subject 23) creates value conflicts.

The responses for this question were compared by department for all five of the major categories as seen in Table 16. Only one major theme emerged with a significant difference between departments, that was organizational attributes, $\chi^2 (2, N = 112) = 6.53, p < 0.05$. Intake workers were more likely than either children services or family services workers to mention organizational attributes as a factor which caused dissatisfaction. This major theme was then analyzed for the subcategories that emerged by department, in order to provide further insight into departmental differences and negative elements of the work. In conducting this analysis, only one subcategory reached significance in terms of differences between department; overtime. The subcategory of paperwork approached significance at $p < 0.1$. Here children service workers were more likely to mention the subcategory of overtime than their counterparts.

The subcategories were enumerated and the chi-square was calculated in order to measure how those subcategories related to the two measures of burnout (EE and DP) which were previously found to be statistically significant between departments. There was a difference between those study participants who rated high on EE and those who rated low of EE as it related to the subcategory of agency change as a negative work factor. Those individuals with higher EE, more frequently identified agency change than their counterparts who rated low on EE, $\chi^2 (1, N = 112) = 3.92, p < 0.05$. Similarly, more participants who rated high on EE, identified overtime (a job characteristic factor) as an element of the work they did not like, as opposed to those with low EE scores who

Table 16: Departmental Comparisons with Job Dissatisfaction Factors

Factors	Prevalence (%)			χ^2
	C.S.	F.S.	Int.	
Organizational Attributes (Theme)	16.7 ^a	40.0 ^b	58.6 ^c	6.53 *
Job Characteristics (Theme)				
Subcategories:				
Overtime	41.7 ^a	4.6 ^b	17.2 ^c	13.84*
Paperwork	58.3 ^a	36.9 ^b	20.7 ^b	5.59***
Worker Attributes (Theme):				
Subcategory:				
Feelings of Stress	33.3 ^a	10.8 ^b	6.9 ^b	5.86***

Note: Group percentages with different superscripts were significantly different from each other ($p < 0.05$, Ryan's procedure).

*** Approaches statistical significance at $p < 0.1$

* $p < 0.05$

identified this same factor. This result seemed to approach significance, $\chi^2 (1, N = 112) = 2.9, p < 0.1$. More participants who rated high on the EE measure indicated that paperwork (a job characteristic factor) was a negative aspect of the job than those who rated low on EE and mentioned paperwork, $\chi^2 (1, N = 112) = 6.28, p < 0.05$.

In relation to the DP measure, there were two significant results. The first was with the minor theme of paperwork (a job related factor), where those who rated high on

the DP measure identified paperwork as a negative work issue more than those who rated low on DP with a result of, $\chi^2 (1, N = 112) = 6.77, p < 0.05$. There was also a significant relationship with the subjects who indicated that the lack of community resources was a negative factor of the job ($\chi^2 (1, N = 112) = 4.4, p < 0.05$). In summary, paperwork was significantly related to EE and DP, and approached significance between the departments.

Strategies Used by Workers to Manage Work Stress/Burnout

The question; “what strategies do you use to effectively handle/deal with the stress of your position?” revealed that the frontline child protection workers at WECAS tend to use four main strategies: support, physical means, personal means and work/life balance.

Over half of the study participants, $n = 76$ (67.9%), identified physical means for effective handling of stress, such things as hobbies, diets and “physical exercise” (subject 65) being mentioned. Other examples included, “golfing” (subject 73), “listen[ing] to music [and] read[ing]” (subject 61), “eat[ing] right and exercis[ing] as regularly as possible” (subject 51) and, “eat more chocolate” (subject 26).

The concept of support has already been established as an important factor when it comes to this population. As it related to strategies for effective coping, the theme of support was once again prominent. From the study participants, 64.3% ($n = 72$) mentioned the need for some type of support. Support to deal with job stress was identified by this sample as being required from several different sources including; family, friends, supervisors and peers. The following are renditions of this theme as delivered by the sample: “I debrief with my supervisor and colleagues regularly” (subject

55), I “ask others to help when necessary” (subject 100), I “share feelings with colleagues” (subject 101), “I spend time with family and friends” (subject 107), and I “share a tub of ice cream with my daughter while we watch mindless t.v.” (subject 58).

A significant amount ($n = 65$, or 58%) reported using a work/life balance strategy to effectively deal with their work stress. Many stated that they “leave work at work” (subject 54) and “enjoy home life” (subject 57). Others discussed taking the time away during the work day for breaks and lunch, while others explained that they prioritize and use vacations, holidays and flex time. Here are some examples of what the sample had to say in regards to work/life balance; “I make use of my six weeks vacation time during the summer to recharge” (subject 52) and “try to limit late appointments” (subject 66). I “plan ahead” (subject 69) and use “organization [techniques] and time management” (subject 74).

Individual strategies, or “taking care of myself” (subject 105) was yet another theme emerging from this question. This theme was identified by 30, or 26.8% of the participants and comprised of such things as volunteering, use of religion, meditation, EAP (employee assistance plan) or use of a positive attitude in relation to the work. Like the physical means, these individual strategies were simple and varied, and included such things as “pray and read my bible” (subject 21), “coronas and lime” (subject 99), “laugh as much as I can” (subject 51), “use a sense of humor” (subject 13) was mentioned often, as was “think positively” (subject 97). Other strategies focused around attitude toward the work, such as: “treat clients with respect” (subject 79), and “realize that [you] can’t change the things that [you] can’t control” (subject 23). One participant described

“keep[ing] a journal of funny things people say, or nice thing[s] people say. [He or she] has it on hand and review[s] it on the days that are a little more difficult than others” (subject 34). Some individuals have sought professional support like subject 48 who “sees a personal therapist to address burnout and stress management”, while others mentioned the “use of the EAP” (subject 52).

The strategies identified by this sample for coping with stress and burnout were diverse. Some of the strategies were unique to that one participant, many strategies were common and simplistic yet deemed effective, while several specific strategies were mentioned by numerous participants. It appears that the effective handling of stress is dependent on the individual and perhaps his or her circumstances at the time. Most participants listed several strategies ranging between many of the major themes, indicating this populations propensity for resilience through diverse and creative devices.

Attitudes Toward Technology in The Field

There have been changes in how child protection work is executed with the use of computers in the last 15 years or so, however it is not known how technological advances affect frontline child protection workers. The development of new computer systems to attempt to ease the documentation and paperwork burden of this job, as well as adequately maintaining child protection records is not new to this province. Through conventional wisdom, it is known that this population has been through several changes in technology including such programs as; an agency data base called Frontline the use of a word processing program, the Excel program, Fast Track, a provincial data base

program, use of the Groupwise computer software for internal and external email, and now the development of Matrix, which is designed to replace all of the other previously used data bases and word processing programs used by WECAS. The question of whether technological changes have enhanced the frontline workers' ability to perform their work in an efficient manner was asked in the study.

As it pertained to answering yes or no to the question of whether or not the participants felt that technology has enhanced their ability to perform their work, it appears the response was indeed not so simple. From the 112 study participants, only 38 felt technology had without a doubt improved their ability to deliver services and, 65 felt it did not. There were six noncommittal responses, indicating a yes/no response and three respondents were not sure.

In regards to why the study participants felt the way they did about technology, the answers fell into three notable yet far-ranging themes including those who felt technology was helpful and effective, those that felt an adjustment to change was required and identified the need for training in this area, and those who felt technology was ineffective. The following is an analysis of how the sample expressed their feelings about technological advances using the three themes previously mentioned.

There were 33 individuals who felt that technology did help them do a better job, "computer is quick, efficient [and provides] easy access" (subject 108), "information is readily available to be retrieved and if others in the agency needed to take a look at the case [they would] have easy access" (subject 33), and "email is an excellent way to communicate and keep track of your contact and fast-track [province wide child protection

data base] is very helpful” (subject 34). Many could see the need for a new system and felt that “if Matrix lives up to its expectations it will achieve efficiency “ (subject 57). “Once the kinks are worked out.. who knows how long that will take” (subject 67).

The second theme was that of adjustment to change and training requirements which was identified in 47% of the responses. For some the need to adapt to technology is just another change, “over the last 7 years there have been numerous changes in child welfare” (subject 34), “[the agency is] constantly changing the way we do paperwork” (subject 45), and “one just gets use to a particular program and it changes” (subject 48), the “agency has introduced far too many changes too quickly” (subject 53), and “too much too soon” (subject 95). Many felt that for the technology to have a positive impact on how they do their work, they require more training and support staff; “we were not properly trained” said subject 8, and there is a “need [for] administrative support to help with this [implementation of the new program]” (subject 14). Many of the individuals felt “technologically challenged” (subject 20) thus, making it difficult for them to learn a new system.

In terms of the theme pertaining to technology being unhelpful, many participants indicated that new computer programs were simply too time consuming and frustrating, “the new program seems to take longer to complete your modules [ministry required paperwork]” (subject 10), and “the program is down frequently for hours at a time” (subject 13), inhibiting the workers’ ability to complete paperwork during the specific time which they may have set aside for doing so and, “Currently the new program Matrix is not efficient and is in fact more time consuming to operate”. Many of the responses

reflected an element of frustration with the use of technology, such comments included; “recent implementation occurred too quickly” (subject 50), referring to the ‘glitches’ in the new system, “it has increased my workload because I am more inputting my own data and this has lead to an increased level of stress” (subject 61) and, “we are doing more work at our desks and not our with the clients” (subject 71); indicating a frustration with how their work time is spent and how workers are now directly inputting demographic and client history information into the system as opposed to the support staff who once fulfilled this function. The majority of the participants referenced the concern of time and frustration as it related to technological advances.

It is apparent that most do not feel that technology is simply a benefit, but that it comes with adjustments, a learning curve and an investment of time. Through this study’s previous questions, it has been established that child protection workers feel overwhelmed with competing demands that come from various sources, therefore the ever changing technological advances for this population can at times be an added burden. Generally, advancements in technology are beneficial in the long-run, and many among this sample were aware of this. There was no real consensus as to how computers affected this population’s ability to do their work, therefore, the impact of technological change in the domain of child protection would require further research.

Summary of Qualitative Results

This sample offered a comprehensive data set which allowed for insight into the stress/burnout, job satisfaction and coping mechanisms of child protection workers. There was a tremendous degree of complementarity within the data, between the aspects identified by the subjects as problematic and those that were described as gratifying. There were also similarities with what the agency had attempted to offer to address stress/burnout and what the sample felt the agency should do. It appears that much of what draws an individual to this particular field are also some of the largest stressors for that individual. Those aspects of the job that are identified as stressful are equivalent to what the workers like about the job. Further, what frontline workers feel the agency should do to address stress and improve levels of job satisfaction is what the agency is doing to address stress and raise job satisfaction among their staff. There are remarkable parallels, the issues are the same on both sides of the pendulum when it comes to stress/burnout and job satisfaction. What may vary among workers is the intensity of the stress, leading to different coping strategies and creating varying views of the experiences of the agency and job. Achieving the appropriate balance of stress for the frontline child welfare practitioners is the challenge for child protection organizations. Many aspects of this work are attractive, however if in excess those same aspects become precursors to burnout and low job satisfaction.

Discussion

The purpose of this chapter will be to develop a better understanding of the findings and highlight the most significant revelations of the study. The research questions in light of the literature review and the analysis of data will be reviewed.

Demographic Results

Surprisingly, the categories of worker attributes and work experience were not strong predictors of either burnout or job satisfaction. In contrast to other studies mentioned in the literature review that highlight certain personal characteristics such as age, marital status and education as strong predictors of job satisfaction (Jayaratne & Chess, 1984) and burnout (Maslach et al., 2001), this study observed small non-statistically significant such relationships. It is particularly interesting that neither age nor years of experience were significant predictors of burnout or job satisfaction. Recent reviews of burnout studies have lead to the conclusion that sex is not a strong predictor of burnout “some studies show higher burnout for women, some show higher scores for men, and others find no overall differences” (Maslach et al., 2001, p.410). This study supports the past research literature, in the fact that it did not find age to be a predictor of burnout or job satisfaction. Although many studies cite afterhours work as a predictor of stress, this study demonstrated that work with the afterhours program was not a predictor of burnout or job satisfaction. This is most likely due to the voluntary nature of the program, where other studies are referring to the extra hours put in by the regular working staff.

Burnout

Are there differences in burnout levels between departments? The simple answer to this question is yes, if simply looking at the levels of burnout, however, there are several other factors which must be considered. As indicated in the results section (Table 9), those study participants in the Children Services department rated significantly higher than those in the Intake and Family Services department on the DP and EE scales of burnout, those being the most reported measures of the inventory by other researchers. Other differences between departments which were noted on Table 11 included that the Children Services department had significantly more males than the other two departments, fewer individuals with a Bachelor of Social Work degree, fewer individuals participating in the afterhours program and more workers with over seven years experience. Age, marital status and gender had no relationship to either dependent variables in this study. Many of these findings contradict the literature Anderson (2000) noted gender and after-hours, on call requirements as a factor for stress and Maslach and her colleagues (2001), reported that age, marital status and education are often cited in research as significant factors to stress and burnout. In their review of job burnout and its related factors, Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter (2001) surmised that age is the one demographic variable most consistently related to burnout. With regard to marital status, most studies show that those who are unmarried seem to be more prone to burnout compared to those who are married (Maslach et al., 2001). However, none of those worker attributes were significantly associated with high EE or DP in the current study when accounted for in the regression analysis. That is to say that the factors which may account for higher levels of burnout

within the Children Services department may not have been accounted for in this study, or the higher burnout rate is simply the product of the department worked.

The agency's restructuring in January 2004 was most likely a factor in this analysis and provides reason for caution in concluding that Children Services Workers are more burned-out. The biggest difference was noted between the Children Services and Intake departments. In January, 2004 some of the Children Services workers, for the most part those with fewer years of experience, were transferred to the Family Services department. It is unknown, however it is possible that there may have been less of a difference with the scores on burnout prior to January, 2004 between the departments. The restructuring element cannot be discounted, however, the predictor variable of department did still account for between 7-15% of the variability of EE and DP between departments and must have some practical significance. Certainly the Children Services department should be a target for intervention with this agency. As workers in that department reported the burden of paperwork more often than their counterparts as it related to job stress, therefore this factor should be closely examined when attempting to ease the burden of work for those within the Children Services department.

Job Satisfaction

The answer to this study's second question as to whether there are differences in job satisfaction levels between departments may be answered in the negative. For this study when both the single item and full measure of the Quinn et al. (1973) job satisfaction

survey were analyzed, neither resulted in differences between departments. Both measures were also analyzed for any relationship to burnout, and again the analysis did not even approach statistical relevance. This measure was tested for its potential relationship to other important variables in this study as listed in Table 1. Overall, global job satisfaction was not found to significantly correlate to any of those variables. Conversely, a study by Jayaratne et al. (1991), found that worker attributes did account for a large portion of the variance in job satisfaction. There was no difference in job satisfaction according to whether the frontline worker had finished a baccalaureate or Masters program. Similar results were found with previous studies of child protection workers (Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991).

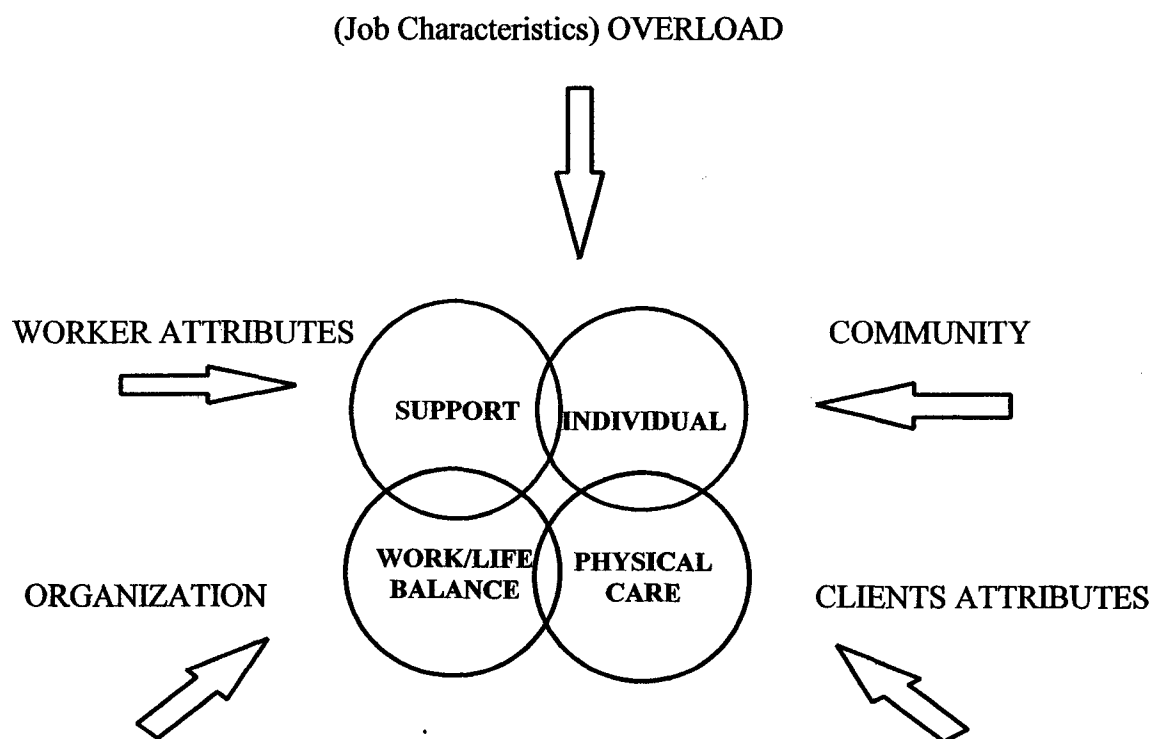
The quantitative portion of this study did not seek to evaluate job satisfaction on other work and organizational factors such as feelings of accomplishment, supervision, or client attributes. The study completed by Jayaratne and her colleagues (1991) found that organizational attributes were strongly associated with job satisfaction and burnout compared to client attributes. A recent study done in Ontario with child protection employees found that organizational attributes had a substantial impact on job satisfaction. Rooney & Leslie (2004) found that supervisory support had a strong significance to work-related attitudes and job strain “employees who reported more support from their supervisor were more satisfied with their jobs” (p. 13). The qualitative results of this study support, organizational attributes as an important factor for job satisfaction. This was the only major theme to produce results which were significantly different between departments.

In conclusion, job satisfaction levels did not vary between departments, as it relates to this study and the global overall sense of job satisfaction.

Qualitative Results

The qualitative portion of this study was further analyzed for the relationship of all the questions asked. The first examination is presented in Figure 1 which demonstrates how the child protection practitioner guards him/herself against the stressors of the job, which are the overload of job duties, the community expectations, the clients, organizational attributes and worker attributes, by utilizing support (family, friends and colleagues), physical care, individual needs, and work-life balance. This figure explains how all the major themes found in question one, "what are the major sources of stress in your position?" relate to those found in question seven, "what effective strategies do you use to deal with stress?". It is a demonstration of the various stressors frontline child protection workers are faced with and how they must find varied means to address their stress. There is no set strategy used to combat any single source of stress. This diagram outlines that child protection workers feel stressors are coming from all different areas. Workers attempt to effectively manage the multitude of stressors by using various methods of coping from different aspects of their work and life. When a balance is created between stressors and coping strategies, stressors are less likely to lead to burnout and loss of job satisfaction.

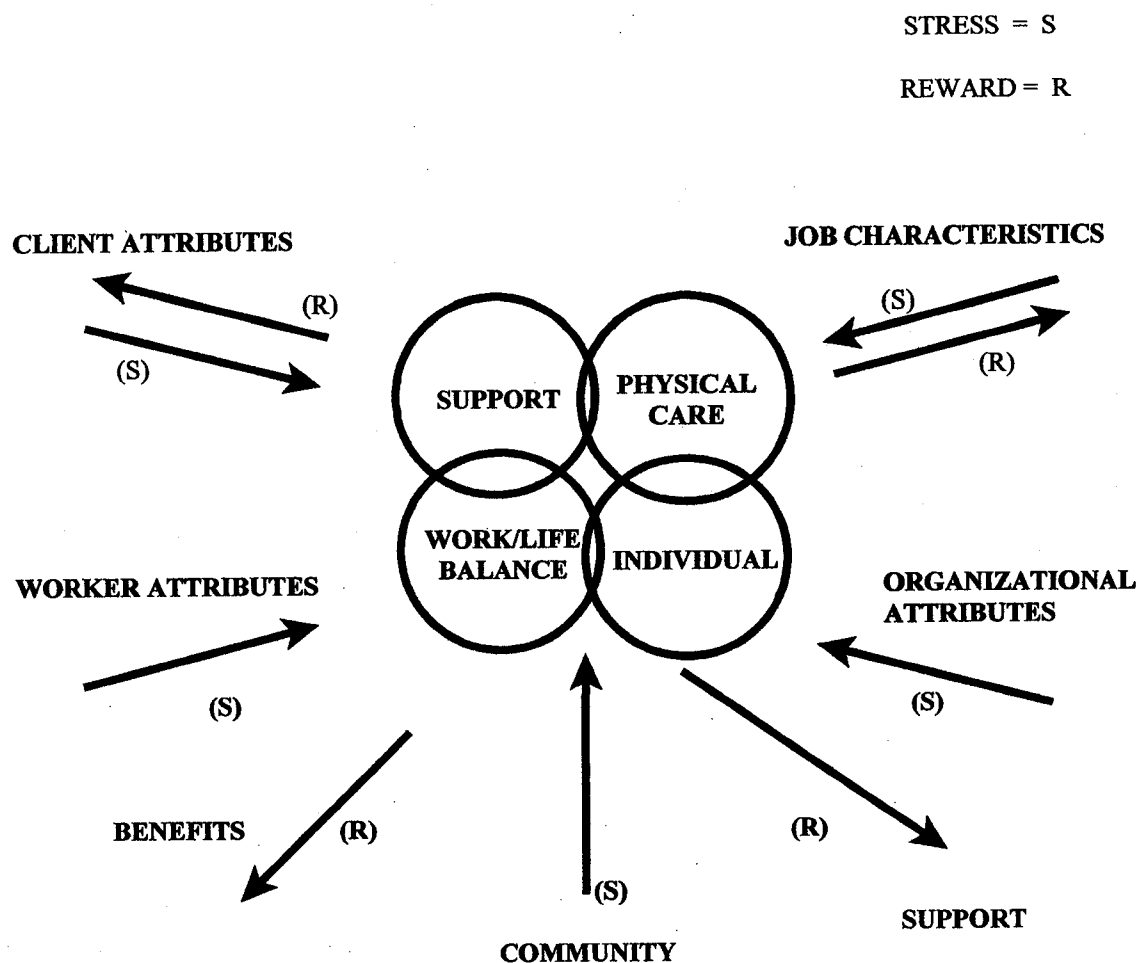
Figure 1: Stress and Coping Balance



The second conceptual model is illustrated in Figure 2 and brings to light the responses of the participants for questions one, five and six. This model concurs with the belief that factors which impact upon job satisfaction and feelings of dissatisfaction and burnout are both functions of worker, organizational, community and client attributes. That is, these phenomenon are both the product of job satisfaction as well as sources of

stress and burnout causing dissatisfaction with the work for child protection practitioners. This finding demonstrates the dichotomy for the frontline child welfare worker: the very aspects of the work from which they acquire satisfaction are those that evoke stress. This pattern of work stress, also contributing to job satisfaction, can be further illustrated by examining some of the study participants responses for the qualitative questions. Subject 1 indicated that for him or her “stress comes from workload, time management and organization. There is always lots to do, with not enough time....sometimes, dealing with angry clients can be stressful, we are often the ones they blame”, however, this individual “like(s) working with clients, seeing them make change.... likes learning new things. No two days are the same” and again this same individual documented that he/she does not “like dealing with conflict and blaming from clients. I don’t like having to be the bad guy when clients are not cooperative or following through.... I don’t like feeling that there is too many things to do and not enough time”. This participant therefore, indicated that client attributes are a source of stress, job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. The job characteristics (or work duty factors) rated as a stressor in the major theme of “overloading”, however, are also seen as a source of job satisfaction in the concept of every day being different and challenging, for this worker. Subject 18 described her/his

Figure 2: Dichotomy of Attributes Causing Stress/Burnout and Job Satisfaction



major sources of stress as “lack of support from coworkers/supervisors”, then went on in question five to say that he/she liked the “team work atmosphere [and] support” but did not like how “sometimes workers tend to be favored and given leeway”. Subject 18, then indicated that the organizational attribute of management support was a source of stress, job dissatisfaction as well as a source of job satisfaction. Another illustration of this dualism is with subject 31, who reported that a source of stress for him or her was that

“community agencies are not always cooperative”, however she/he gets satisfaction in her/his job by “networking with other community agencies”. This type of liaison between responses was often uncovered, Subject 7 indicated that “one of the major stressors can be the uncertainty on a day to day basis. It is often uncertain what will occur on a day to day basis”, but likes “the [fast] pace and days go by quickly, it is challenging and there is a lot to learn”. In that instance with subject 7, the theme of job characteristics was noted as stressor and a source of job satisfaction. Yet another example of this construct is found with subject 13 who reported that a major source of stress was “lack of available supervisors” however one aspect of the job which he/she likes is “the freedom and flexibility. You get to manage your own caseloads”. This dichotomy within the factors which contributes to satisfaction as well as stress and dissatisfaction is relevant as it pertains to addressing the elements of burnout and job satisfaction for child welfare agencies. In examining subject 13, the dilemma for the organization is whether or not to increase the worker-supervisor ratio. With more supervisors, the availability for consultation and debriefing would increase, however this worker may not appreciate the extra case management which may be provided by supervisors with more opportunities to review work structure and schedules and oversee case management, as it may encumber on some of this worker’s autonomy, a positive work attribute for this study participant. This dilemma of constructing strategies to improving job satisfaction and dealing with stress and burnout will be further examined later in this document.

An evaluation comparing what the study participants feel the organization is doing to address stress, with what participants would like the agency to do to address stress and

improve job satisfaction was conducted. This comparison involved those major themes identified for questions two and four. Table 17 illustrates the parallels by placing the concepts side by side, that in this instance, major themes mirrored each other exactly. It could then be postulated that the organization has at least attempted or targeted some of the main factors which the workforce feels is significant in assisting them in dealing with their work. As illustrated with the analysis of the question regarding how effective the strategies used by WECAS to address stress/burnout have been, many workers are not completely satisfied. This finding does support the agency's efforts and provides a good rational for those same efforts to be maintained.

Table 17: Relating Organizational Strategies to Proposed Solutions

What should WECAS do		What are they doing
Nature of the Job	<----->	Job Characteristics
Organizational Attributes	<----->	Organization Attributes
Support	<----->	Support
Benefits	<----->	Benefits

As it relates to the concept of burnout (which was found to be significantly different between departments) it appeared from the qualitative data, that the EE measure of burnout was related to the themes of requiring more training, the burden of agency change, overtime and paperwork. Those who ranked high on EE mentioned those concepts as stressors or issues which cause dissatisfaction with the work. All of those

themes related to either job characteristics or organizational attributes. In terms of the DP measure of burnout, the themes of paperwork and community relationships were more prevalent with those who had high scores in DP as compared to those who had low scores on DP. It is interesting to note that paperwork was significantly related to both the outcome measures of burnout; DP and EE, the two outcomes which were also found to be significantly different between departments. Further analysis demonstrated that the theme of paperwork was significantly different within the department of Children Services. Within that department, those that rated high on both DP and EE noted paperwork issues more often as a work strain, than those who rated low on both DP and EE. The theme of organizational attributes as it pertained to factors which caused job dissatisfaction, was found to be more prevalent among those in the Family Services department however, was also a notable factor for those in the Intake department. To address work stress/burnout and promote job satisfaction for the entire frontline staff, the focus should be on the overall paperwork demands, organizational attributes such as improving inter-departmental relationships and promoting mutual understanding for the varied roles between departments, planning better for agency changes and building positive community relationships. Recommendations for specific departmental focuses to address stress and heighten job satisfaction include, overtime work for Children Services, and organizational attributes for Intake and Family Services.

Conclusion

This study sought to explore the differences in levels of burnout and job satisfaction among the frontline departments of child welfare, to learn more about what workers identify as being associated with burnout/stress and job satisfaction and to determine if there are any similarities or differences in these factors between the frontline departments. There has been a plethora of studies in the human service field on burnout and job satisfaction. There has also been much interest with these constructs specifically among child protection workers. No studies were found which examined how the organizational structure in regards to how service is delivered to the families and children affects burnout and job satisfaction levels among child protection workers. This study represents the first known research that specifically attempts a comparative analysis of department on burnout and job satisfaction levels and factors relative to positive and negative feelings about the work. The implications for this are directed toward shaping future efforts at increasing research in this area as well as examining various relationships likely to impact on burnout and job satisfaction.

Implications for Practice

This section will be dedicated to offering suggestions for interventions to burnout and job dissatisfaction as it relates to the findings from the literature and this study. Significant to this population was the need for support, agency change and focus on overall organizational attributes. Furthermore, it was determined that to effectively retain child protection workers with good emotional health, employers must not only know what

factors motivate their workers and what factors cause them to feel stress and dissatisfaction, but must understand when a positive factor can turn negative given the dichotomy found within the stress/burnout and job satisfaction qualitative responses.

This study found that organizational attributes and job characteristics were related to EE and DP and highly correlated to the concepts identified by the sample as issues causing them the most stress at work and affecting job satisfaction. Similarly, low organizational commitment is among the strongest predictor of turnover or intention to leave (Barak, Nissly & Levin, 2001), a factor known for its relationship to burnout (Acker, 1999; Daley, 1979; Drake & Yadama, 1996; Fryer, Miyoshi & Thomas, 1989; Holloway & Wallinga 1990; Koseke & Koseke, 1989; Ratliff, 1988; Um & Harrison, 1998). Since the major predictors of stress/burnout and job satisfaction are not worker attributes or related to the balance between work and family but are organizational or job-based, there might be a great deal that both managers and policy makers can do to improve working conditions for frontline child protection workers (Barak, Nissly & Levin, 2001). Anderson (1996) suggested that child protection practitioners

have the same needs for emotional debriefing as law enforcement officers, firefighters, EMS workers, emergency room personnel, and rape/crisis workers, many of whom would say that the hardest part of their job is working with maltreated or injured children (p.846).

That study recommended that child welfare administrators recognize and routinely provide frontline workers and supervisors opportunities to deal with work related stress

and emotions (Anderson, 1996), thus meeting this population's strong need for support. Such intervention may block a positive job characteristic from becoming a burnout factor. If workers can be provided with immediate support and intervention, they may be better equipped to manage any potential stressors.

An important theme to this sample, was that of community relationships, Anderson (1996) reported that child protection administrators should provide a work environment that focuses on healthy collaboration with other community agencies and education of the community about child protection work. It is suggested that child protection agencies invest more time and energy in positive community relations and education around child welfare work in order to ease some of the work burden for this population.

Another important finding is that those elements that cause stress and dissatisfaction in the work are also the things that provide satisfaction with the work. The issues are complementary, therefore simply eliminating those negative elements from the work will not assist in satisfying this work force. There is no ultimate method for addressing the issues of stress/burnout and low job satisfaction among this workforce. There is no panacea to addressing this complex issue. These study findings support a pluralistic approach to intervention where multiple strategies are available to carefully match the current, although changing needs of each individual. To remove those aspects identified as stressors would in essence change some of the very things which promote job satisfaction. The themes around what workers see as stressful and what they deem to be positive work factors parallel each other. These conceptual parallelisms are

fascinating. Totally removing some of the stressors would alter the characteristics of the job that are seen as positive. Management must instead take careful action in order to promote and maintain a balance of all the factors involved in this field. How each of the major categories affects different individuals is idiosyncratic. It could be that at different times in an individual's career, the diverse potential sources of stress interact with the individual and create very different outcomes. The same stressor may have a totally different effect on the same individual at another time in his or her career and personal life. Another possibility is that the stressors are the same for all individuals; however it is the intensity or the sheer amount of multiple stressors that differs among the frontline workers. The task then is for each individual to find a proper balance which suits his or her distinct career and life experiences and to learn what his/her personal threshold is for coping constructively with the various stressors. The role of the agency then becomes much more complex and management must then undertake to ensure that there are multiple and varying strategies available in order for the child protection practitioners to have the tools available to identify their unique needs, then achieve their own separate balance for their distinct situation. Further, it would then be expected that not all strategies offered by the agency would fit for each individual. Management must recognize the need for diverse strategies. The findings support that the agency promotes a multi-faceted approach to addressing stress, one which can address the changing needs of the individual.

6

Future Research Directions

This chapter is dedicated to specifying how these study findings might inform and direct further research on burnout and job satisfaction among child protection workers. Below are three specific areas for future inquiry in examining burnout and job satisfaction in relation to child welfare frontline workers. Although certainly not exhaustive, this list includes some of the more critical issues in burnout and job satisfaction research as it relates to the field of child protection.

First, other potential moderating influences of EE and DP on department must be examined. Individual traits or characteristics of the department work must be examined and included in the analysis in order to determine what is contributing to the other approximately 80% of variability between departments not accounted for by the department worked or any of the other work history and worker attributes tested in this study. There is a need to consider other predictor variables and measure them. Perhaps looking at personality traits such as ability to be flexible or coping mechanisms as they related to burnout and job satisfaction would offer some insight into what causes higher burnout scores and lower job satisfaction scores and assist in developing appropriate interventions. Furthermore, there has been research around post traumatic stress and vicarious trauma as it pertains to this population, it would be interesting to note whether these concepts have a relationship to burnout or job satisfaction. It was also apparent that organizational attributes were important to this sample, therefore assessing some of those factors further in terms of their relationship to burnout and job satisfaction would also be of benefit. There are other gaps in existing knowledge, including the examination of

macro level variables such as funding, organizational structure and setting.

Secondly, it would be interesting to evaluate if there is a critical time in a child protection worker's career during which burnout is more likely to occur. This study demonstrated that levels of burnout and job satisfaction were not significantly impacted by either lack of experience in the field or by age or marital status. This study reported that many of the same factors which are considered positive aspects of the work can also be negative factors, therefore perhaps burnout and job satisfaction measures fluctuate, not with individual characteristics, or department, but rather with life and career circumstances. A longitudinal study may shed some light on this phenomenon. A study which could identify the circumstances which turns a positive factor to a negative one for this population is necessary.

In terms of the job satisfaction inquiry, for this study a global survey was used to examine overall satisfaction with the work. Such a job satisfaction measure did not result in any departmental differences and there were no significant relationships between job satisfaction, any of the worker attributes tested, or the burnout scale. Future studies may specifically attempt to examine the relationship between burnout and job satisfaction. Perhaps future research with frontline child welfare workers could examine the issue of job satisfaction with a more facet-specific scale, measuring various aspects of work. This type of measure may be lengthy and time consuming for study participants, however, it can provide a more detailed analysis of job satisfaction. Due to the potential difficulty of acquiring participants to complete such a lengthy survey, perhaps the construct of job satisfaction should be researched separately from other outcome measures such as

burnout. More insight might be gained by specifically implementing some of the strategies suggested earlier to mediate stress/burnout and job satisfaction and incorporate a pre and post test to analyze the effectiveness of interventions.

Finally, a more profound qualitative inquiry on worker stress/burnout and job satisfaction should be sought. The utilization of key informant interviews, focus groups and member checks would allow for more profound data to be collected from this highly functional and insightful group. The open ended questionnaire portion of this study was informative and left the researcher feeling there was more knowledge to gain from this population.

Limitations and Strengths of the Study

No single study can resolve all the controversial issues within a given area. This section is committed to examining the potential shortcomings of this study as well as those elements which increased the confidence of the findings. Below is a review of issues related to the sample and the tool used to measure job satisfaction as it relates to limitations for this study as well as the use of the MBI tool to measure burnout, the researcher's knowledge of the field and population and the use of a multi-faceted research design to highlight the strengths of the study.

The convenience sample of frontline child protection workers chosen for this study does present some limits with the generalizability of the study's findings. There may have been intervening events affecting this population, such as the agency's restructuring and implementation of a new computer system for data and record keeping.

This could lead to reports that present some bias due to distorted perceptions or overshadowing of new events (Weinbach & Grinnell, 2001).

Another limitation related to the sample is that the researcher had no information about the non-respondents. This researcher was bound by added confidentiality restraints which may or may not have been imposed on an outside researcher. It is possible that workers who chose not to participate in the study were those that were more burned out and dissatisfied with their job. If that were the case, then it would suggest that this study's observed departmental differences are probably underestimates of the truth. It is also plausible, however, that more burned out or dissatisfied workers (e.g. those with an "axe to grind") preferentially participated. And if that were the case, it would bode for this study's observed departmental differences being overestimates of the truth, perhaps even erroneously being deemed significant. Regrettably, without empirical verification (e.g. burnout and job satisfaction measure of non-respondents), we cannot accurately know how such selection bias might be operating here, if at all.

At least two patterns among this study's findings provided some measure of control for such possible response bias. First, departmental differences were only observed for two of the burnout measures and for neither of the job satisfaction measures. If some significant form of response bias were pervading this study's sample, one might expect to see pervasive evidence of it across both measures of burnout and job satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Also, substantial patterns of consistent practicality and statistically significant agreements were observed among both the findings of this study's quantitative and qualitative methods, therefore, decreasing the probability that it is

selection bias alone that explains them all. Together these phenomena make it seem likely that such biased selection is a potential alternative explanation for this study's findings. Clearly though, there is a need for future studies in this field to empirically confirm (or refute) this belief.

The decision to use a facet-free job satisfaction measure for this study was based on previous research around child protection workers as well as the simplicity and short length of the entire survey. It was determined that in order to attract as many participants as possible and obtain a rich qualitative data base, that the burnout and job satisfaction measures needed to be quick and simple to complete. Future research aimed at examining job satisfaction among this population should use a more facet-specific measure, including measurements of various aspects specific to child welfare work in order to test for departmental differences.

There is a sense that several of the strengths of this research study, such as the dual methods of quantitative and qualitative measures used, the researcher's knowledge of the field and population and the use of the MBI, a widely used measure of burnout with documented validity rates help to mitigate these above noted concerns. The use of multiple instruments, sources and analysis procedures (or use of triangulation as described in the data analysis section of this document) from which to collect data produced a more solid empirical base, which lends more credence to the data collected in this study. The data collected via the open ended questions assisted in providing another level of insight. Credibility within qualitative measures involves the degree to which the researcher is adequately representing the phenomenon which is being examined (Lincoln

& Guba, 1985). To achieve this, Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed several procedures to consider, including prolonged engagement by learning the culture and building trust. Both elements were present in this study due to the researcher's direct, long-term connection to the population. The sample size and response rate for this study was formidable as it compared to other child welfare studies in the province, thus supporting the claim of credibility and trust within this study.

Findings of the Study

The results from this study suggest that burnout and job satisfaction levels may likely not fluctuate between department worked. Nevertheless, this study did provide further understanding on burnout and job satisfaction among child welfare workers. It is essential that child welfare organizations find solutions to the problem of job related stress, otherwise child protection workers may become burdened and exhausted emotionally and develop other symptoms of burnout, a serious problem for these individuals, their families and clients.

The findings suggest the need for multi-faceted approaches to enhance job satisfaction and address stress among child welfare practitioners in order to meet their high need for support. There is a need to know how to provide workers with the means to identify their own personal limits, strengths and how to best balance both throughout their child welfare career. Of equal importance was the finding that organizational factors including agency change, are crucial to this population. Attention must be paid in the area of how the organization functions as a whole, how organizational changes are

planned with the workers and the perception of the organization from the community.

In the introduction of this document, there was reference of the possibly that some of the lateral movement found within child protection agencies (workers moving from one frontline department to another) may be due to the belief that one department is less stressful than others. That notion would be a misnomer according to this study. Little of an individual's burnout score, or improved job satisfaction will be ameliorated simply by transferring to a different department within the same child protection organization because there was no significant difference between job satisfaction and department worked, and no statistical significance with burnout measures between Intake and Family services. There was some difference between the Children Services department and the other two frontline departments, however, this difference requires further evaluation as it is possible that this variance has more to do with this particular agency's recent restructuring which directly impacted the Children Services department.

To recruit and retain emotionally fit professionals in the field of child protection, it would help to know more about the factors that attract and retain them, as well as the obstacles and deterrents that produce stress and discourage their continuation in the field (Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991). From the qualitative portion of this study, it was deduced that those factors are often the same; what attracts individuals to this field is also what promotes stress and dissatisfaction. The goal is balance and variation in stress prevention models. There is no ultimate way to address burnout and job satisfaction. The findings support a pluralistic approach to addressing the issue of stress, burnout and job satisfaction with frontline child protection workers which can offer each individual the

opportunity of finding and maintaining their own delicate balance so as not to let a positive work factor cause burnout and dissatisfaction with the job.

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Appendix A
Description of Intake Job

JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE: INTAKE WORKER

DEPARTMENT: INVESTIGATION / ASSESSMENT & AFTER HOURS

Job Summary:

Under the general supervision of a Supervisor, delivers a range of services related to intake that includes conducting child abuse and protection investigations, completing safety and risk assessments to determine appropriate protection and brief treatment services to children and families. All actions are performed according to regulations set out under the Child and Family Services Act (C.F.S.A.), Ministry of Community and Social Services standards and guidelines and Society policy and procedures.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To receive, assess and investigate (under Part III of the CFSA) allegations of neglect and abuse in accordance with Ministry standards and guidelines and agency policy and procedure.
2. Provide counselling and other services in accordance with the Child and Family Services Act, Ministry standards and guidelines and agency policies and procedures
3. Complete reports, clinical records and other administrative requirements in accordance with the CFSA, Ministry standards and guidelines and agency policies and procedures.
4. In consultation with the Supervisor and legal counsel, prepare cases to be heard in court and give evidence as required.
5. Utilize technology and information systems to process and retrieve information as per agency expectations.
6. To actively uphold the agency's Mission, Values and Ends Statement.

INTAKE WORKER

Duties and Responsibilities - Detailed

Provides intake and assessment services by:

- Effectively gathers referral information, cross-references and determines the immediate level of risk to children. These decisions are made in consultation with an Intake supervisor and all complaints are responded to within the Ministry directed time frames.
- Receive referrals from the community, which are coded by Intake Screeners and are determined to require a protection investigation.
- Assessing children's level of risk and need for protection via the safety and risk assessment tools.
- Determines the need for Agency intervention by utilizing the Eligibility Spectrum.
- Respond to all cases within a 7 day period as per the Ministry standards and guidelines.
- Follows the case plan outlined by the Intake Supervisor.

Conducts child abuse and protection investigations by:

- Interviewing children alleged to be abused, their parents, their siblings, other potential victims and significant others.
- Using video and audiotape equipment to document interviews where appropriate.
- Obtaining reports and other information from schools, police, hospitals, and potential witnesses and other professional/community agencies or individuals.
- Conducts abuse investigations for all children in the care of the Society.

Provides child protection services as required by:

- Assessing the need for emergency admission of children to care by apprehension.
- Arranging for the admission and discharge of children requiring care through the use of Temporary Care Agreements, co-coordinating the plan of care through the Service/Treatment Plan.
- Carrying out duties associated with preparation, planning and participation in court proceedings in consultation with the supervisor and Society legal counsel.

Appendix B

Description of Family Services Job

JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE: FAMILY SERVICE WORKER

DEPARTMENT: FAMILY SERVICES

Job Summary:

Under the general supervision of a Supervisor, Delivers a range of Child Protection Services including Risk Assessment, Case Management, Counselling, Advocacy and referrals, to promote the well being and safety of the children in our community. These services are delivered to children and families according to regulations and standards under the Child and Family Services Act, and the established policies and procedures of the Society.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To receive, assess and investigate (under Part III of the CFSA) allegations of neglect and abuse and provide ongoing child protection services in accordance with Ministry standards and guidelines and agency policy and procedure.
2. Provide psychosocial assessments and implement treatment plans using a variety of assessment tools and modalities. This will include therapeutic interventions such as individual and group treatment as required.
3. Provide counselling and other services in accordance with the Child and Family Services Act, Ministry standards and guidelines and agency policies and procedures
4. Complete reports, clinical records and other administrative requirements in accordance with the CFSA, Ministry standards and guidelines and agency policies and procedures.
5. In consultation with the Supervisor and legal counsel, prepare cases to be heard in court and give evidence as required.
6. Utilize technology and information systems to process and retrieve information as per agency expectations.
7. To actively uphold the agency's Mission, Values and Ends Statement.

FAMILY SERVICE WORKER

Duties and Responsibilities - Detailed

Provides on-going protection services by:

- Receiving cases transferred from Investigation / Assessment and implementing the Service Plan.
- Conducting ongoing reassessments of risk factors to ensure that the service plans are adequate to reduce risk and prevent harm to children or alternately to close those cases that no longer meet eligibility.
- Conduct new investigations on all cases where new information indicates a child may have suffered or is at risk of suffering physical, emotional or sexual harm, or is otherwise in need of protection as per the Eligibility Spectrum.
- Complete an assessment regarding the immediate safety of all the children in the family where an investigation is occurring. Where necessary, develop an immediate safety plan to ensure the protection of the children.
- When voluntary services are no longer sufficient to protect children, implement the appropriate court proceedings in consultation with the supervisor and Society Legal Counsel. This could include apprehension, seeking a Supervision Order or Society or Crown Ward ship. The worker plays an active role in providing evidence to prove the child is in need of protection and proposing an appropriate plan to address the protection concerns.
- Arrange for the admission and discharge of children requiring Society care.
- Working with the Children's Services Worker and Resource Worker to ensure that the child's plan of care is adequately coordinated and implemented

Conducts child abuse and protection investigations by:

- Interviewing children alleged to be abused, their parents, their siblings, other potential victims and significant others.
- Using video and audiotape equipment to document interviews where appropriate.
- Obtaining reports and other information from schools, police, hospitals, and potential witnesses and other professional/community agencies or individuals.
- Conducts abuse investigations for all children in the care of the Society.

Provides child protection services as required by:

- Provide or arrange for counselling or support services for children and families to reduce risk and strengthen families.
- Assess the effectiveness of those services to make decisions regarding family reunification or ongoing eligibility for service
- Assist new workers and students with mentoring, job shadowing and transfer of learning experiences.

Appendix C

Description of Children Services Job

WINDSOR-ESSEX CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

TITLE: Children's Services Worker

DEPARTMENT: Children's Services

PAY BAND: 16

Date of Review: Nov. 6, 2002

Job Summary:

1. Under the general Supervisor, delivers a range of case management and advocacy services to children in care in accordance with the regulations and standards of the Child and Family Services Act, Ministry standards and guidelines, policies and procedures of the Society.
2. Includes coordination of child's placement, provision of treatment and counseling services to children in care.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Provides and manages services to children and youth in care and their families according to the mandate of the Child and Family Services Act and established practices, policies and procedures of the Society. Services shall include, but not limited to:

- a. To assess the risk to children in care, and assist in the investigation of allegations of abuse.
- b. To develop, implement and review child's Plan of Care focusing on case management, treatment plans, permanency and independence.
- c. To prepare recommendations and Ministry documentation for extension of care beyond age 18.
- d. To carry out duties associated with preparation, planning and participation in the placement and replacement process of children.
- e. To act as guardian and advocate for children in care.
- f. To share duties associated with the access of children and youth to their families as detailed in the Plan of Care and to carry out the duties with access of children and youth who are Crown Wards.
- g. To provide direction and support to foster parents and natural families in relation to child's care, management and treatment needs.
- h. To participate in the assessment of placement of children being considered for adoption.
- i. Utilize technology and information systems to process information as per agency expectations.

- j. Actively uphold the agency's Mission, Values and Ends Statement.

Qualifications/Skills/Experience

- BSW or equivalent, B.A. with related experience working with children and families.
- High degree of professional and ethical values, self-motivation and organizational skills.
- Demonstrated ability to monitor the implementation of services to children and identify the need for programs and services.
- Demonstrated knowledge/experience of normal child/ adolescent development and special needs children.
- Demonstrated ability to exercise tact and diplomacy when working with clients, foster parents and collaterals.
- Demonstrated ability to cooperate with others and participate in team service approach.
- Possess a valid drivers license with demonstrated driving record.
- Demonstrated computer literacy according to job requirements.
- Excellent written, oral, observational, listening skills.

Duties and Responsibilities — Detailed

Provides on-going Children's Services by:

1. Receiving cases transferred from Intake and Family Services and developing the Plan of Care for the child.
2. Scheduling and overseeing the child's Plan of Care including Looking After Children Assessment Action Record.
3. Developing goals to meet the identified needs of the child including those for permanency planning and independence.
4. Assigning tasks to ensure implementation of the Plan of Care.
5. Ongoing review and reassessment of goals and progress.
6. Working with the Family Services Worker and Resource Worker to ensure their knowledge of child's Plan of Care.
7. Performing the duties of a guardian for children in care in the YOA court process, in registering and attending school conferences, accompanying youth to Legal Aid, fingerprinting, interpreting the court process, and any other YOA collateral appointments as well as by signing for medical treatment, and psychotropic drugs.
8. Performing the duties of an advocate for children in care by working with collaterals (personnel in children's mental, foster parents, personnel in custody facilities, probation officers, victim witness personnel) to access necessary treatment and services to ensure the goals of the Plan of Care are attained.
9. Determines youths' suitability for Extended Care and Maintenance (ECM) and

ensures youths' best interests are maintained.

10. Completing written reports for YOA court.
11. Provides evidence in family court and attend family court matters as required.
12. Moving and replacing children and their possessions.
13. Ensures and participates in the completion of the child's life book.
14. Arrange for the discharge of children from Society care.
15. Carry out duties associated with preparation planning and participation in court proceedings, utilizing Supervisor and the Society's legal counsel.

Assists in child abuse investigations by:

Provides support to child/youth during abuse investigations. At the request of the investigating worker, interviews child alleged to be abused, completes documentation and participates in conferencing.

Provides Child management services as required by:

1. Provide or arrange for counseling or support services for children in care to meet the identified needs detailed in the Plan of Care.
2. Assist new workers and students with mentoring, job shadowing and transfer of learning experiences

Provides on-going treatment:

1. Delivering crisis intervention to children at risk and their foster parents
2. Providing individual, group and family (foster) counseling.
3. Making referrals to other professionals and community agencies where appropriate.
4. Development, implementation and review of case management and Plan of Care.
5. Possesses the necessary knowledge and skills to analyze all relevant information to reach a conclusion about the verification of protection concerns.

Performs administrative duties by:

1. Reading relevant file materials related to assigned cases.
2. Completing detailed case notes made contemporaneously subsequent to each interview/case contact, case recording, Looking After Children Assessment and Action Record (AAR), reports and correspondence.
3. Participating in team, committee, agency and community meetings as required.
4. Participating in training programs and professional development as required.
5. Managing case related expenditures within authorized limits.
6. Terminating services and closing files.

7. Providing backup coverage to other workers, emergency case coverage and any other time needed to ensure a Children's Services person is available at all times.
8. Complete all Children's Service computer forms detailing all children's movements while in care (e.g. placement forms)

Perform other related duties by:

1. Participating in the promotion of agency services as directed.
2. Providing case direction to After-Hours/Afternoon coverage workers.
3. Provide education to the public regarding the C.F.S.A., the Society's services and other community resource information.
4. Service of court documents for other Children's Aid Societies (OSW).

Appendix D

Description of Resources Job

WINDSOR ESSEX CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE: RESOURCE WORKER

DEPARTMENT: RESOURCES

PAY BAND: 15

Review Date: January 22, 2004

5 yr. Review Date: Prior to January 2009

Under the general supervision of the Supervisor, Resource Services, delivers services:

1. Related to recruiting, assessing and training foster parents and securing placements for children in the care of the Agency. Provides support and assistance to all foster parents in the Agency.
2. Related to accessing and liaising with Group Care/Outside Paid Resources for children in care. Includes Group Care/Outside Paid Resource for children in care in Windsor and throughout the province of Ontario.

These duties are performed in accordance with the regulations and standards of the Family Services Act, Ministry standards and guidelines, policies and procedures of the Society.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Foster Care:

1. Recruits and assesses foster parents by:

- maintaining and updating information on foster home resource needs;
- processing inquiries about fostering;
- completing assessments of potential foster families and recommending approval or non- approval to the unit supervisor, Resource unit and to the courts as required completing ongoing assessment of all foster families in the Agency.

2. Coordinates training for foster parents by:

- identifying current training needs of foster families and approving such training;
- developing, coordinating, and conducting training for foster families and staff
- evaluating the success of the training programs for foster parents;
- developing and maintaining a system to accredit and track Foster Parent Training.

3. Secures placements for children in need of care by:

- reviewing the ARIP and assessing a child's individual and/or special needs;
- matching needs of the child with an available foster home;
- exploring and securing emergency placements, alternate placements, relief placements and replacements;
- problem-solving based on the needs of Hard to Service children and teens;
- communicating with collateral Agency workers, directors, supervisors and outside community resources;
- completing a daily update to facilitate next day's coverage as well as inform coverage workers of remaining tasks;
- completing coverage case notes on each foster home to update afternoon shift and/or after hours workers in regards to each home;
- facilitating emergency monetary reimbursement for initial foster care placements/replacements;
- participating in coverage work on a rotating weekly basis

4. Provides support and assistance to all foster parents by:

- acting as a liaison between the Agency and all foster parents to ensure that the child's Plan of Care goals are successfully attained;
- assisting foster parents in their education and recognition;
- acting as an advocate for foster parents both at the Agency and in the community;
- ensuring that issues and concerns between foster parents and the Agency are processed appropriately;
- providing support to the foster parents' natural children in the home to ensure successful foster care placements;
- ensuring that foster parents complete all required documentation in accordance with Agency policy and procedures;
- attending foster parent events;
- providing and coordinating crisis intervention in foster homes as well as making decisions in emergency situations on the basis of familiarization with individual caseloads;
- providing support to foster families as foster children are replaced from the home and/or transition towards an adoptive home.

5. Perform ongoing Foster Care Worker job duties such as:

- attending Foster Home Investigations and Verification conferences;
- conducting a closing interview with foster parents each time a foster home is

- closed;
- attending in-home Seven (7), Thirty (30) and Ninety (90) day visits for each individual placement and/or replacement of a child, as mandated by Ministry guidelines;
- attending and participating in the initial Thirty day Plan of Care for every child placed in a foster home as well as any other Plan of Care as required/needed or requested by the foster home as well as any other Plan of Care as required/needed or requested by the foster parents and/or Agency workers;
- working the afternoon-shift on a rotating basis, as required;
- attending weekly Resource Department meetings;
- attending Quarterly Meetings involving Foster Care Workers and Children's Services Workers;
- attending all Agency Staff Meetings as scheduled;
- attending court as required with reference to foster home assessments;
- participating in meetings with Agency lawyers to prepare for court proceedings;
- participating in the promotion of Agency services;
- assisting in the training of students;
- performing any other duties as assigned.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Group Care:

- To liaise with the operators of Group Care/Outside Paid Resources and maintain a professional relationship that ensures a situation that is mutually beneficial;
- To liaise with the operators of Group Care/Outside Paid Resource and maintain a professional relationship that ensures a situation that is mutually beneficial;
- To participate in a process for staff to access placements for children;
- To participate in a process for staff to evaluate Group Care/Outside Paid Resources following/during placements;
- Maintaining an up-to-date list of Group Care/Outside Paid Resources that the agency has deemed appropriate placements for children in care;
- To facilitate placements for hard to serve children to permit the agency to place children outside the agency or in specifically designed programs within the Society;
- Participating in an agency procedure for social workers to access placements for children who have been assessed as suitable for Group Care/Outside Paid Resources. This will include timely updates on the progress of accessing a placement;
- Working with Children's Services Workers, Family Service Workers and Resource Workers to ensure their knowledge of placements and the process to access Group

Care/Outside Paid Resources;

Perform administrative duties utilizing technological support as appropriate by:

- Utilize technology and information systems to process information as per agency expectations to complete case recording, reports, home studies, and correspondence;
- completing a Closing Recording and all other required documentation each time a foster home is closed;
- completing documentation as required following foster home approval and case file opening;
- completing Annual Evaluations;
- completing requisite statistical and related information;
- providing weekly updates to Resources Department in regards to the availability of their foster home bed and group home beds;
- compiling daily relief, coverage and after hours lists;
- completing initial rate reviews within thirty (30) days of a child placed in a foster home;
- participating in all subsequent reviews as needed;
- completing Post Placement Reviews with foster parents for every child that leaves a foster home;
- participating in case conferences as it relates to foster parents and group home placements;
- participating in court conferences as it relates to foster parents;
- participating in team, committee, Agency and community meetings as required;
- participating in training programs as required.

QUALIFICATIONS/SKILLS/EXPERIENCE:

- ▶ BSW or equivalent, B.A. with related experience working with children and families.
- ▶ High degree of professional and ethical values, self-motivation and organizational skills.
- ▶ Understanding of the Foster Care Financial Procedures Manual and the Foster Care Manual.
- ▶ Understanding of the Ministry Standards and Guidelines particularly as it pertains to Foster Care Licensing.
- ▶ Demonstrated ability to monitor the implementation of services to children and to identify the need for programs and services.
- ▶ Demonstrated familiarization with community resources to effectively link foster

- ▶ parents to these resources and liaise with the agencies as needed.
- ▶ Demonstrated basic knowledge as it pertains to the demographics of the entire Agency foster parent list so as to effectively facilitate placements.
- ▶ Comprehension of the functions of every Agency internal department to be able to educate foster parents on the inner workings of the Agency.
- ▶ Demonstrated knowledge/experience of normal child/adolescent development and special needs children.
- ▶ Demonstrates ability to cooperate with others participate in a team service approach.
- ▶ Demonstrated ability to exercise tact and diplomacy when working with clients, foster parents, group home staff and collaterals.
- ▶ Possess above-average written, oral, observational and listening skills.
- ▶ Demonstrated computer literacy specific to job requirements.
- ▶ Demonstrated ability to prioritize and complete appropriate documentation in a timely manner.
- ▶ Valid Class "G" Driver's Licence and demonstrated safe driving record.

Note: The position(s) of "Group Care Coordinator", "Home Study Worker", "Foster Care Worker - Recruitment & Training" and "Recruitment Worker - Alternate Care" are now obsolete to the Society, due to the "Re-engineering of Services" initiative implemented January 5, 2004. The responsibilities of these positions have been rolled into the existing Foster Care Worker position (re-named "Resources Worker") position. Employees in these positions have been reassigned to the Resource Worker position effective the same date.

Appendix E
Letter of Information



Letter of Information

Title of Study: Burnout and Job Satisfaction Among Frontline Child Protection Workers: A departmental analysis.

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Rachelle Rail (Graduate Student, School of Social Work, University of Windsor) and supervised by Dr. Kevin Gorey (Professor, School of Social Work, University of Windsor). Results will be contributed to the student's graduate program thesis.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact me at 252-1171, ext. 2691 or Dr. Kevin Gorey, Professor, University of Windsor (Telephone 519-253-3000 ext. 3085; Email: gorey@uwindsor.ca).

• PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to explore the extend, sources and potential solutions to stress, burnout and job dissatisfaction in child protection work as it relates to the frontline child protection staff.

• PROCEDURES

Method:

The study involves a combined design of both qualitative and quantitative data. The principal data collection strategies will include: a review of the relevant literature and bibliographic research, and a survey package to be completed by frontline staff at the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society (wecas).

The survey package includes the following:

- Personal and Work History Inventory (about 5 minutes to complete)
- Human Services Survey (about 5 minutes to complete)
- Job Aspects Survey (about 5 minutes to complete)
- 7 open-ended questions (about 10 minutes to complete)

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

- Read the enclosed Letter of Information.
- Sign the enclosed Consent Form and submit to the researcher.
- Complete the enclosed survey package.
- Enclose and seal the completed survey package in the envelope provided.

Approximate length of time for participation in total is 30 minutes and you will only be asked to complete one survey package. The surveys will be completed on the work site. There are no planned follow-up sessions.

- **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any point of time without any form of negative consequences.

There may be minor and limited psychological risks associated with your participation in this study. The questions being asked are around your role and responsibilities as a child protection worker as well as your feelings about the work and work environment. As you ponder your thoughts and feelings about the work you may become distressed. Please remember that the agency offers individual and confidential counseling services through the Employee Assistance Program (E.A.P.) and you may contact the service at any time.

- **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

The current study is intended to provide valuable information about issues and concerns around working in the field of child welfare. The study will also contribute to the knowledge base of child welfare work through disseminating the results of the inquiry in scholarly academic forums (i.e. journals or seminars) with formal acknowledgement of the participation from the staff at the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society.

You may benefit from the opportunity to educate the community, administrators, and funders about the day-to-day work you do and to give your opinion regarding the concerns and issues of working in child welfare. Your views are valued and may contribute to future planning. Your participation could provide management information on how to assist and support you with your work.

The study will also serve as an opportunity for one graduate student to learn, first-hand, the conduct of applied social welfare research. The researcher, will be permitted to use the data from the inquiry to complete thesis requirements of the Masters of Social Work program.

- **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

Participants will not receive remuneration for their participation in this study.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission.

Your responses will be treated with the strictest confidence. You will not be identified from your responses. All hard copies of data (e.g. paper survey and questionnaire) will be kept in a locked cabinet in an office, at the University of Windsor until analysis, and will then be destroyed.

- **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

- **FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE SUBJECTS**

Once the data has been collected and analysed, there will be a summary report made available to the employees of the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society. Also, the final student thesis will be available through the University of Windsor Leddy Library.

- **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact:

Research Ethics Coordinator
University of Windsor
Windsor, Ontario
N9B 3P4

Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3916
E-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

- **SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of Investigator

Date

Appendix F
Consent Form



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title of Study: Burnout and Job Satisfaction Among Frontline Child Protection Workers: A departmental analysis.

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Rachelle Rail (Graduate Student, School of Social Work, University of Windsor) and supervised by Dr. Kevin Gorey (Professor, School of Social Work, University of Windsor). Results will be contributed to the student's graduate program thesis.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact me at 252-1171, ext. 2691 or Dr. Kevin Gorey, Professor, University of Windsor (Telephone 519-253-3000 ext. 3085; Email: gorey@uwindsor.ca).

• PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to explore the extend, sources and potential solutions to stress, burnout and job dissatisfaction in child protection work as it relates to the frontline child protection staff.

• PROCEDURES

Method:

The study involves a combined design of both qualitative and quantitative data. The principal data collection strategies will include: a review of the relevant literature and bibliographic research, and a survey package to be completed by frontline staff at the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society (wecas).

The survey package includes the following:

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- 7 open-ended questions (about 10 minutes to complete)

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

- Read the enclosed Letter of Information.
- Sign the enclosed Consent Form and submit to the researcher.
- Complete the enclosed survey package.
- Enclose and seal the completed survey package in the envelope provided.

Approximate length of time for participation in total is 30 minutes and you will only be asked to complete one survey package. The surveys will be completed on the work site. There are no planned follow-up sessions.

• POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any point of time without any form of negative consequences.

There may be minor and limited psychological risks associated with your participation in this study. The questions being asked are around your role and responsibilities as a child protection worker as well as your feelings about the work and work environment. As you ponder your thoughts and feelings about the work you may become distressed. Please remember that the agency offers individual and confidential counseling services through the Employee Assistance Program (E.A.P.) and you may contact the service at any time.

- **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

The current study is intended to provide valuable information about issues and concerns around working in the field of child welfare. The study will also contribute to the knowledge base of child welfare work through disseminating the results of the inquiry in scholarly academic forums (i.e. journals or seminars) with formal acknowledgement of the participation from the staff at the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society.

You may benefit from the opportunity to educate the community, administrators, and funders about the day-to-day work you do and to give your opinion regarding the concerns and issues of working in child welfare. Your views are valued and may contribute to future planning. Your participation could provide management information on how to assist and support you with your work.

The study will also serve as an opportunity for one graduate student to learn, first-hand, the conduct of applied social welfare research. The researcher, will be permitted to use the data from the inquiry to complete thesis requirements of the Masters of Social Work program.

- **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

Participants will not receive remuneration for their participation in this study.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission.

Your responses will be treated with the strictest confidence. You will not be identified from your responses. All hard copies of data (e.g. paper survey and questionnaire) will be kept in a locked cabinet in an office, at the University of Windsor until analysis, and will then be destroyed.

- **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

- **FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE SUBJECTS**

Once the data has been collected and analysed, there will be a summary report made available to the employees of the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society. Also, the final student thesis will be available through the University of Windsor Leddy Library.

- **SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA**

Your data will not be used in subsequent studies.

- **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact:

Research Ethics Coordinator
University of Windsor
Windsor, Ontario
N9B 3P4

Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3916
E-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

- **SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE**

I understand the information provided for the study " Burnout and Job Satisfaction Among Frontline Child Protection Workers: A departmental analysis" as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Subject

Signature of Subject

Date

- **SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of Investigator

Date

Appendix G

Research Ethics Board Letter of Approval

Appendix H

Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society Letter of Permission

Appendix I
Personal Inventory

Personal and Employment History Inventory

Please fill out the following information about yourself and your background.

1. Gender (circle one): Male / Female
2. Age: _____
3. Years of college education: _____ Years of University education: _____
4. Degree(s)/Diploma (s) obtained: _____
5. Marital Status (circle one):
 Single / Common law / Married / Separated / Divorced / Widowed
6. Do you have children (circle one)? Yes / No 7. If yes, how many _____
8. Residence (circle one): Windsor / Leamington / outside of Windsor or Leamington
9. How far do you travel to get to work: _____ km.

CAS Involvement

10. Current Department (circle one):
 Intake / Family Services / Children Services / Resources / Support / Adoption
11. Years of experience with child welfare: _____
12. Years of experience with the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society: _____
13. Years of experience with the current department you are working: _____
14. Number of open files currently: _____ 15. Number of Family files in court: _____

Personal and Employment History Page 2.

16. Number of children in care files currently on your caseload: _____
17. Severity of Family files (according to the Risk Assessment Model):
- Number of High Risk and Moderately High Cases: _____
- Number of Intermediate Risk Cases: _____
- Number of Moderately Low and Low Cases: _____
18. How many sick days have you used in last year: _____
19. Use of stress leave in CAS career (circle one): Yes / No
20. If yes, how long were you on stress leave: _____ days.
21. Do you currently work Afterhours (circle one): Yes / No
22. If yes, how many shifts: _____/month (Or) _____/ year.
23. In the last month, how often have you thought about leaving the agency? (Circle one)
- Never / once or twice / once per week / every day
24. In the last month, how often have you thought about leaving your current department for another at this same agency? (Circle one)
- Never / once or twice / once per week / every day

Appendix J

Study Survey

HUMAN SERVICES SURVEY

Please answer the following questions by circling the number that best describes how you feel. Use the chart below as a reference.

How often:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times	Once a month	A few times	Once	A few times	Every
		a year	or less	a month	a week	a week	day

Item 1: I feel emotionally drained from my work.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 2: I feel used up at the end of the workday.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 3: I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 4: I can easily see how my recipients feel about things

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 5: I feel I treat some recipients as if they were impersonal objects.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 6: Working with people all day is really a strain for me.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 7: I deal very effectively with the problems of my recipients.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

How often:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times	Once a month	A few times	Once	A few times	Every
		a year	or less	a month	a week	a week	day

Item 8: I feel burned out from my work.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 9: I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 10: I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 11: I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 12: I feel very energetic.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 13: I feel frustrated by my job.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 14: I feel I'm working too hard on my job.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 15: I don't really care what happens to some recipients.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

How often:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times	Once a month	A few times	Once	A few times	Every
		a year	or less	a month	a week	a week	day

Item 16: Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 17: I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my recipients.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 18: I feel exhilarated after working closely with my recipients.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 19: I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 20: I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 21: In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Item 22: I feel recipients blame me for some of their problems.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Please answer the following questions by circling the number that best describes how you feel.

Item 23: All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with your job.

1. Very satisfied 2. Somewhat satisfied 3. Not too satisfied 4. Not at all

satisfied

Item 24: If a good friend of yours told you he/she was interested in working in a job like yours for your employer, what would you tell him/her? Would you....

- | | | |
|--------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Strongly | 2. Have doubts about | 3. Advise him/her |
| recommend it | recommending it | against it |
-

Item 25: Knowing what you know now, if you had to decide all over again whether to take the job you now have, what would you decide?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Decide without | 2. Have some second | 3. Decide definitely not |
| hesitation to take same job | thoughts | to take the job |
-

Item 26: Taking everything into consideration, how likely is it that you will make a genuine effort to find a new job with another employer within the next year?

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Very likely | 2. Somewhat likely | 3. Not at all likely |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|
-

Item 27: In general, how well would you say that your job measures up to the sort of job you wanted when you took it? Would you say it is:

1. Very much like 2. Somewhat like 3. Not very much like

..... the job you wanted when you took it?

Item 28: On most days on your job, how often does time seem to drag for you?

1. Often 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never
-

Item 29: Some people are completely involved in their job, they are absorbed in it night and day. For other people, their job is simply one of several interests. How involved do you feel in your job?

1. Very little 2. Slightly 3. Moderately 4. Strongly

Appendix K
Qualitative Questionnaire

Questionnaire

The following questions ask you to write your opinions about the sources and potential responses to stress in child protection work. Please answer the following questions using complete sentences and avoid single word responses. Also, provide as much detail as you require and be as specific as possible with your responses. Use the other side of the page if further space is needed.

1. What are the major sources of stress in your position?
2. What has the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society done to address child protection worker stress?

5. What do you like about your job?

6. What don't you like about your job?

7. What strategies do you use to effectively handle/deal with stress of your position?

8. Do you feel that technological changes have enhanced your ability to perform your work in a more efficient manner?

_____ Yes

_____ No

9. - Why?

Vita Auctoris

Rachelle Rail was born in Windsor, Ontario on October 26, 1969. After completing her secondary education at L'Ecole Secondaire L'Essor (High School) in St. Clair Beach, Ontario, she attended the University of Windsor. Following receipt of a Bachelor of Social Work degree from the University of Windsor in 1992, she was employed as a Project Coordinator for the Windsor Women's Incentive Centre. In 1993 she was hired as a frontline child protection worker for the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society in the Family Services Department. Since that time she has worked as a frontline worker in the Intake department and is currently a supervisor in the Family Services department.